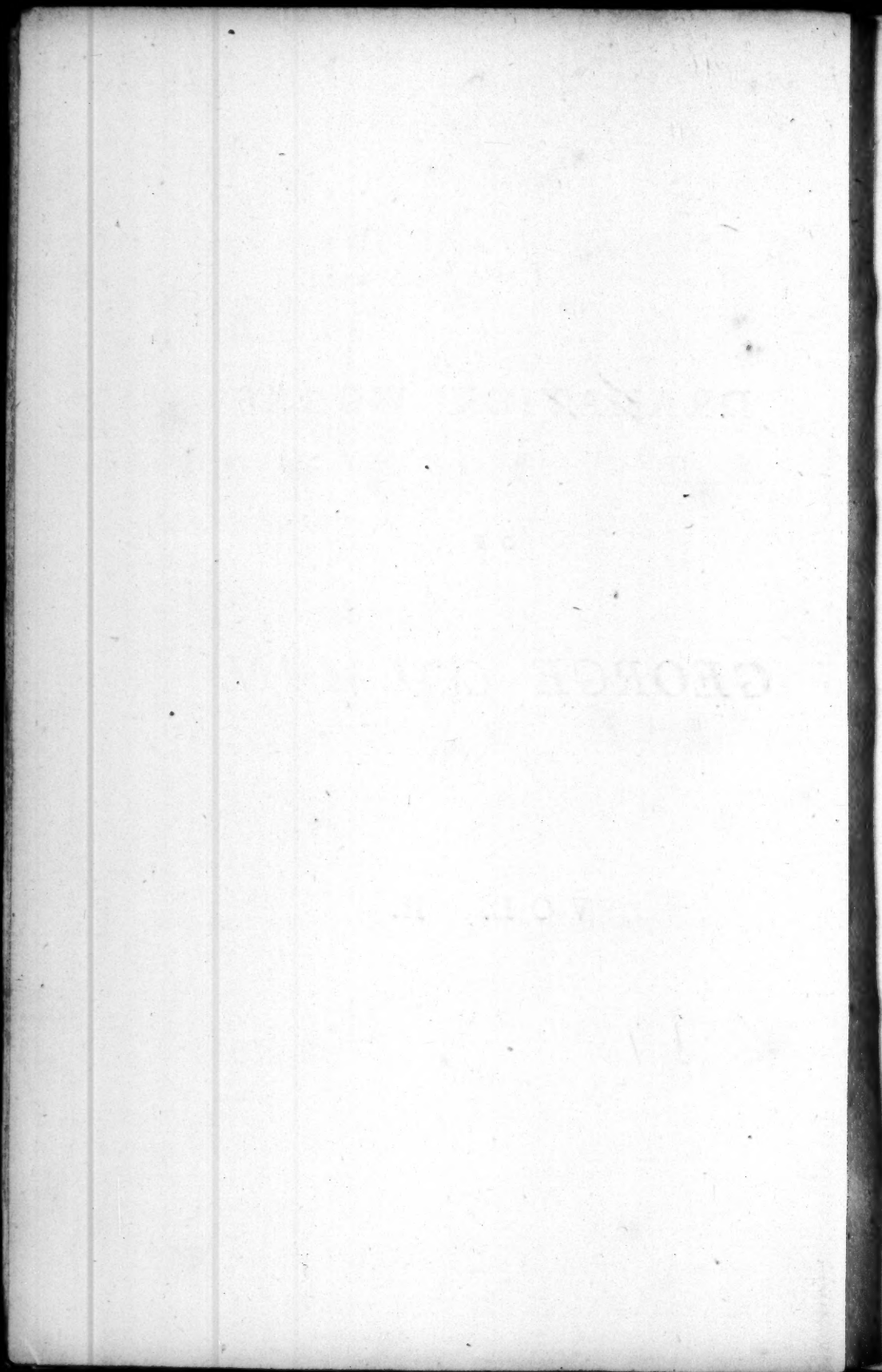


THE
DRAMATICK WORKS
OF
GEORGE COLMAN.

VOL. II.



THE
DRAMATICK WORKS
OF
GEORGE COLMAN.

VOLUME THE SECOND;

CONTAINING,
The ENGLISH MERCHANT, | MAN and WIFE; Or,
The MAN of BUSINESS, | The SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE.

L O N D O N,
Printed for T. BECKET, Adelphi, Strand.

MDCCLXXVII.

SC 5665A

T H E
ENGLISH MERCHANT.

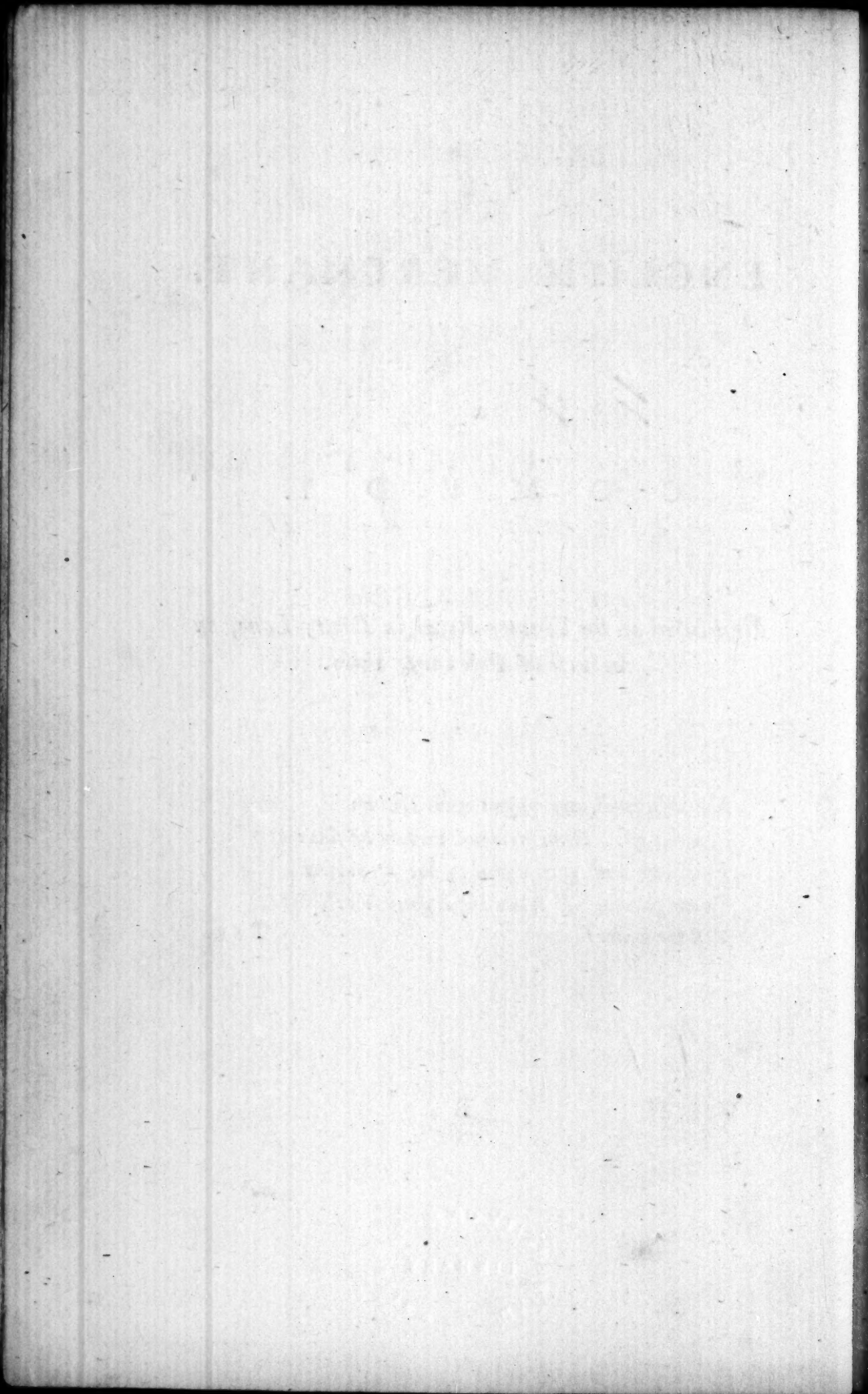
A
C O M E D Y.

*First acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, on
the 21st of February, 1767.*

*Næ illiusmodi jam magna nobis civium
Penuria est. Homo antiquâ virtute ac fide :
Haud cito mali quid ortum ex hoc sit publice.
Quam gaudeo, ubi etiam hujus generis reliquias
Restare video!* T E R.

VOL. II.

B



TO
MONSIEUR DE VOLTAIRE
THE FOLLOWING COMEDY,
A TRIBUTE
DUE TO THE AUTHOR OF
L'ECOSSAISE,
IS INSCRIBED
BY HIS MOST OBEDIENT
HUMBLE SERVANT,
GEORGE COLMAN.

P R O L O G U E,

Spoken by Mr. KING.

EACH year how many English visit France,
To learn the language, or to learn to dance!
’Twixt Dover-Cliffs and Calais, in July,
Observe how thick the birds of passage fly!
Fair-weather fops in swarms, fresh-water sailors,
Cooks, mantua-makers, milleners, and tailors!
Our bard too made a trip; and, fland’ers say,
Brought home, among some more run-goods, a play:
Here, on this quay, prepar’d t’unload his cargo,
If on the freight you lay not an embargo.

“What! am I branded for a smuggler?” cries
Our little Bayes, with anger in his eyes.

“No. English poets, English Merchants made,

“To the whole world of letters fairly trade:

“With the rich stores of ancient Rome and Greece,

“*Imported duty-free*, may fill their piece:

“Or, like Columbus, crosses th’ Atlantick ocean,

“And set Peru and Mexico in motion;

“Turn Cherokees and Catabaws to shape;

“Or fail for *wit* and *humour* to the Cape.”

Is

P R O L O G U E.

Is there a *weaver* here from Spitalfields?
To his award our author fairly yields.
The *pattern*, he allows, is not quite new,
And he imports the *raw materials* too.
Come whence they will, from Lyons, Genoa, Rome,
'Tis English silk when wrought in English loom.
Silk! he recants; and owns, with lowly mind,
His manufacture is a coarser kind.
Be it drab, drugget, flannel, doyley, friese,
Rug, or whatever *winter-wear* you please,
So it have leave to rank in any class,
Pronounce it *English Stuff*, and let it pass!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD FALBRIDGE,	<i>Mr. Powell.</i>
SIR WILLIAM DOUGLAS,	<i>Mr. Havard.</i>
FREEPORT,	<i>Mr. Yates.</i>
SPATTER,	<i>Mr. King.</i>
OWEN,	<i>Mr. Burton.</i>
LA FRANCE,	<i>Mr. Baddeley.</i>
OFFICER,	<i>Mr. Strange.</i>
Servants, &c.	
LADY ALTON,	<i>Mrs. Abington.</i>
AMELIA,	<i>Mrs. Palmer.</i>
Mrs. GOODMAN,	<i>Mrs. Hopkins.</i>
MOLLY,	<i>Miss Pope.</i>

SCENE, LONDON.

THE

T H E
ENGLISH MERCHANT.

A C T I.

SCENE, a room in Mrs. Goodman's house.

Enter Molly, struggling with Spatter.

Molly.

BE quiet, Mr. Spatter! let me alone! Pray now, Sir! It is a strange thing a body can't go about the house without being pester'd with your impertinence. Why fure!

Spat. Introduce me to your mistress then—come, there's a good girl! and I will tease you no longer.

Molly. Indeed I sha'n't. Introduce you to my lady! for what, pray?

Spat. Oh! for a thousand things. To laugh, to chat, to take a dish of tea, to——

Molly. You drink tea with my lady! I should not have thought of that. On what acquaintance?

8 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Spat. The most agreeable in the world, child !
a new acquaintance.

Molly. Indeed you mistake yourself mightily :
you are not a proper acquaintance for a person of
her quality, I assure you, Sir !

Spat. Why, what quality is she, then ?

Molly. Much too high quality for your acquaint-
ance, I promise you. What ! a poet-man ! that
fits, write, write, write, all day long, scribbling a
pack of nonsense for the news-papers ! You're fit
for nothing above a chambermaid.

Spat. That's as much as to say, that you think
me just fit for you. Eh, child ?

Molly. No, indeed, not I, Sir. Neither my lady
nor I will have any thing to say to you.

Spat. Your mistress and you both give yourselves
a great many airs, my dear. Your poverty, I think,
might pull down your pride.

Molly. What does the fellow mean by poverty ?

Spat. I mean that you are starving.

Molly. Oh, the slanderous monster ! we ! starv-
ing ! who told you so ? I'd have you to know, Sir,
my lady has a very great fortune.

Spat. So 'tis a sign, by her way of life and ap-
pearance.

Molly. Well ; she lives privately, indeed, because
she

she loves retirement; she goes plain, because she hates dress; she keeps no table, because she is an enemy to luxury. In short, my lady is as rich as a Jew, and you are an impertinent coxcomb.

Spat. Come, come! I know more of your mistress than you imagine.

Molly. And what do you know of her?

Spat. Oh, I know what I know.

Molly. Well!

[*Alarmed.*

Spat. I know who she is, and where she came from; I am very well acquainted with her family, and know her whole history.

Molly. How can that be?

Spat. Very easily—I have correspondence every where. As private as she may think herself, it is not the first time that I have seen or heard of Amelia.

Molly. Oh, gracious! as sure as I am alive this man will discover us. [*Apart.*] Mr. Spatter, my dear Mr. Spatter, if you know any thing, sure you would not be so cruel as to betray us!

Spat. My dear Mr. Spatter! O ho! I have guessed right—there is something then.

Molly. No, Sir, there is nothing at all; nothing that signifies to you or any body else.

Spat. Well, well, I'll say nothing; but then you must——

Molly.

10 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Molly. What?

Spat. Come; kifs me, huffy!

Molly. I fay kifs you, indeed! 

Spat. And you'll introduce me to your mistress?

Molly. Not I, I promise you.

Spat. Nay, no mysteries between you and me, child! Come; here's the key to all locks, the clue to every maze, and the discloser of all secrets; money, child! Here! take this purse; you see I know something; tell me the rest, and I have the fellow to it in my pocket.

Molly. Ha, ha, ha! poor Mr. Spatter! Where could you get all this money, I wonder! Not by your poetries, I believe. But what signifies telling you any thing, when you are acquainted with our whole history already. You have correspondence every where, you know. There, Sir! take up your filthy purse again, and remember that I scorn to be obliged to any body but my mistress.

Spat. There's impudence for you! when to my certain knowledge your mistress has not a guinea in the world; you live in continual fear of being discovered; and you will both be utterly undone in a fortnight, unless lord Falbridge should prevent it, by taking Amelia under his protection. You understand me, child.

Molly.

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 11

Molly. You scandalous wretch! Did you ever hear such a monster? I won't stay a moment longer with him. But you are quite mistaken about me and my mistress, I assure you, Sir. We are in the best circumstances in the world; we have nothing to fear; and we don't care a farthing for you.—So your servant, Mr. Poet! [Exit.

Spatter alone.

Your servant, Mrs. Pert! “We are in the best circumstances in the world.” Ay, that is as much as to say, they are in the utmost distress. “We have nothing to fear.” That is, they are frightened out of their wits. “And we don't care a farthing for you.” Meaning, that they will take all the care in their power, that I shall not find them out. But I may be too hard for you yet, young gentlewoman! I have earned but a poor livelihood by mere scandal and abuse; but if I could once arrive at doing a little substantial mischief, I should make my fortune.

Enter Mrs. Goodman.

Oh! your servant, Mrs. Goodman! Yours is the most unfociable lodging-house in town. So many ladies, and only one gentleman! and you won't take the least notice of him.

Mrs.

12 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Mrs. Good. How so, Mr. Spatter?

Spat. Why, did not you promise to introduce me to Amelia?

Mrs. Good. To tell you the plain truth, Mr. Spatter, she don't like you. And, indeed, I don't know how it is, but you make yourself a great many enemies.

Spat. Yes; I believe I do raise a little envy.

Mrs. Good. Indeed you are mistaken, Sir. As you are a lodger of mine, it makes me quite uneasy to hear what the world says of you. How do you contrive to make so many enemies, Mr. Spatter?

Spat. Because I have merit, Mrs. Goodman.

Mrs. Good. May be so; but nobody will allow it but yourself. They say that you set up for a wit, indeed; but that you deal in nothing but scandal, and think of nothing but mischief.

Spat. I do speak ill of the men sometimes, to be sure; but then I have a great regard for women—provided they are handsome: and that I may give you a proof of it, introduce me to Amelia.

Mrs. Good. You must excuse me; she and you would be the worst company in the world; for she never speaks too well of herself, nor the least ill of any body else. And then her virtue——

Spat. Pho, pho, she speaks ill of nobody, because

cause she knows nobody; and as for her virtue, ha, ha!

Mrs. Good. You don't believe much in that, I suppose?

Spat. I have not over-much faith, Mrs. Goodman. Lord Falbridge, perhaps, may give a better account of it.

Mrs. Good. Lord Falbridge can say nothing but what would be extremely to her honour, I assure you, Sir. [*Spatter laughs.*] Well, well, you may laugh, but it is very true.

Spat. Oh, I don't doubt it; but you don't tell the whole truth, Mrs. Goodman. When any of your friends or acquaintance sit for their pictures, you draw a very flattering likeness. All characters have their dark side, and if they have but one eye, you give them in *profile*. Your great friend, Mr. Freeport, for instance, whom you are always praising for his benevolent actions——

Mrs. Good. He is benevolence itself, Sir.

Spat. Yes, and grossness itself too. I remember him these many years. He always cancels an obligation by the manner of conferring it; and does you a favour, as if he were going to knock you down.

Mrs. Good. A truce with your satire, good Mr. Spatter!

14 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Spat. Mr. Freeport is my best friend; I owe him every thing; and I can't endure the slightest reflection on his character. Besides, *he* can have given no offence to lady Alton, whatever may be the case with Amelia.

Spat. Lady Alton! she is a particular friend of mine to be sure; but, between you and me, Mrs. Goodman, a more ridiculous character than any you have mentioned. A *bel esprit* forsooth! and as vain of her beauty as learning, without any great portion of either. A fourth Grace, and a tenth Muse! who fancies herself enamour'd of lord Falbridge, because she would be proud of such a conquest; and has lately bestowed some marks of distinction on me, because she thinks it will give her credit among persons of letters.

Mrs. Good. Nay, if you can't spare your own friends, I don't wonder at your attacking mine—and so, Sir, your humble servant. But, stay! here's a post-chaise stopp'd at our door; and here comes a servant with a portmanteau! 'Tis the gentleman for whom my first floor was taken, I suppose.

Spat. Very likely: well, you will introduce me to him at least, Mrs. Goodman.

Enter

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 15

Enter a servant with a portmanteau. Sir William Douglas following.

Sir Will. You are Mrs. Goodman, I suppose, madam?

Mrs. Good. At your service, Sir.

Sir Will. Mr. Owen, I believe, has secured apartments here?

Mrs. Good. He has, Sir.

Sir Will. They are for me, madam. Have you any other lodgers?

Mrs. Good. Only that gentleman, Sir; and a young lady——

Spat. Of great beauty and virtue. Eh, Mrs. Goodman?

Mrs. Good. She has both, Sir; but you will see very little of her, for she lives in the most retired manner in the world.

Sir Will. Her youth and beauty are matter of great indifference to me; for I shall be as much a recluse as herself. Are there any news at present stirring in London?

Mrs. Good. Mr. Spatter can inform you, Sir, for he deals in news. In the mean while, I'll prepare your apartments. *[Exit, followed by the servant.]*

Manent

16 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Manent Sir William Douglas, and Spatter; Sir William walks up and down, without taking notice of Spatter.

Spat. This must be a man of quality by his ill manners. I'll speak to him [*aside.*] [*to Sir William.*] Will your lordship give me leave——

Sir Will. Lordship! I am no lord, Sir, and must beg not to be honoured with the name.

Spat. It is a kind of mistake, that cannot displease at least.

Sir Will. I don't know that. None but a fool would be vain of a title, if he had one; and none but an impostor would assume a title, to which he has no right.

Spat. Oh, you're of the house of commons then, a member of parliament, and are come up to town to attend the sessions, I suppose, Sir?

Sir Will. No matter what I am, Sir.

Spat. Nay, no offence, I hope, Sir. All I meant was to do you honour. Being concerned in two evening-posts and one morning paper, I was willing to know the proper manner of announcing your arrival.

Sir Will. You have connections with the press then, it seems, Sir?

Spat. Yes, Sir; I am an humble retainer to the
Muses,

Muses, an author. I compose pamphlets on all subjects, compile magazines, and do news-papers.

Sir Will. Do news-papers! What do you mean by that, Sir?

Spat. That is, Sir, I collect the articles of news from the other papers and make new ones for the postscript, translate the mails, write occasional letters from Cato and Theatricus, and give fictitious answers to supposed correspondents.

Sir Will. A very ingenious as well as honourable employment, I must confess, Sir.

Spat. Some little genius is requisite, to be sure. Now, Sir, if I can be of any use to you—if you have any friend to be praised, or any enemy to be abused; any author to cry up, or minister to run down; my pen and talents are entirely at your service.

Sir Will. I am much obliged to you, Sir, but at present I have not the least occasion for either. In return for your genteel offers, give me leave to trouble you with one piece of advice. When you deal in private scandal, have a care of the cudgel; and when you meddle with publick matters, beware of the pillory!

Spat. How, Sir! are you no friend to literature? Are you an enemy to the liberty of the press?

18 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Sir Will. I have the greatest respect for both; but railing is the disgrace of letters, and personal abuse the scandal of freedom: Foul-mouthed critics, are in general disappointed authors; and they, who are the loudest against ministers, only mean to be paid for their silence.

Spat. They may be sometimes, Sir; but give me leave to ask you——

Sir Will. Do not ask me at present, Sir! I see a particular friend of mine coming this way, and I must beg you to withdraw.

Spat. Withdraw, Sir? first of all allow me to——

Sir Will. Nay, no reply! we must be in private.
[*thrusting out Spatter.*]

Sir William Douglas alone.

What a wretch! as contemptible as mischievous. Our generous mastiffs fly at men from an instinct of courage; but this fellow's attacks proceed from an instinct of baseness.—But here comes the faithful Owen, with as many good qualities as that execrable fellow seems to have bad ones.

Enter Owen.

Well, Owen; I am safe arrived you see.

Owen. Ah, Sir! would to Heaven you were as safe returned again! Have a care of betraying yourself

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 19

yourself to be Sir William Douglas!—During your stay here, your name is Ford, remember.

Sir Will. I shall take care. But tell me your news! What have you done since your arrival? Have you heard any thing of my daughter? Have you seen lord Brumpton? Has he any hope of obtaining my pardon?

Owen. He had, Sir.

Sir Will. And what can have destroyed it then?

Owen. My lord Brumpton is dead, Sir.

Sir Will. Dead!

Owen. I saw him within this week in apparent good health; he promised to exert his whole interest in your favour: By his own appointment I went to wait on him yesterday noon, when I was stunned with the news of his having died suddenly the evening before.

Sir Will. My lord Brumpton dead! the only friend I had remaining in England; the only person, on whose intercession I relied for my pardon. Cruel fortune! I have now no hope, but to find my daughter. Tell me, Owen; have you been able to hear any tidings of her?

Owen. Alas, Sir, none that are satisfactory. On the death of Mr. Andrews, in whose care you left her, being cruelly abandoned by the relation

who succeeded to the estate, she left the country some months ago, and has not since been heard of.

Sir Will. Unhappy there too! When will the measure of my misfortunes be full? When will the malice of my fate be satisfied? Proscribed, condemned, attainted, (alas, but too justly!) I have lost my rank, my estate, my wife, my son, and all my family. One only daughter remains. Perhaps a wretched wanderer like myself, perhaps in the extreme indigence, perhaps dishonoured—Ha! that thought distracts me.

Owen. My dear master, have patience! Do not be ingenious to torment yourself, but consult your safety, and prepare for your departure.

Sir Will. No, Owen. Hearing, providentially, of the death of my friend Andrews, paternal care and tenderness drew me hither; and I will not quit the kingdom till I learn something of my child, my dear Amelia, whom I left a tender innocent in the arms of the best of women twenty years ago. Her sex demands protection; and she is now of an age, in which she is more exposed to misfortunes than even in helpless infancy.

Owen. Be advised; depart, and leave that care to me. Consider, your life is now at stake.

Sir Will. My life has been too miserable to render

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 21

render me very solicitous for its preservation.—But the complection of the times is changed ; the very name of the party, in which I was unhappily engaged, is extinguished, and the whole nation is unanimously devoted to the throne. Disloyalty and insurrection are now no more, and the sword of justice is suffered to sleep. If I can find my child, and find her worthy of me, I will fly with her to take refuge in some foreign country ; if I am discovered in the search, I have still some hopes of mercy.

Owen. Heaven grant your hopes may be well founded !

Sir Will. Come, Owen ! let us behave at least with fortitude in our adversity ! Follow me to my apartment, and let us consult what measures we shall take in searching for Amelia. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene changes to Amelia's apartment.

Amelia and Molly.

Amelia. Poor Molly ! to be teased with that odious fellow, Spatter !

Molly. But, madam, Mr. Spatter says he is acquainted with your whole history.

Amelia. Mere pretence, in order to render himself formidable. Be on your guard against him, my

22 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

dear Molly; and remember to conceal my misery from him and all the world. I can bear poverty, but am not proof against insult and contempt.

Molly. Ah, my dear mistress, it is to no purpose to endeavour to hide it from the world. They will see poverty in my looks. As for you, you can live upon the air; the greatness of your soul seems to support you; but lack-a-day, I shall grow thinner and thinner every day of my life.

Amelia. I can support my own distress, but yours touches me to the soul. Poor Molly! the labour of my hands shall feed and clothe you. Here! dispose of this embroidery to the best advantage; what was formerly my amusement, must now become the means of our subsistence. Let us be obliged to nobody, but owe our support to industry and virtue.

Molly. You're an angel: Let me kiss those dear hands that have worked this precious embroidery; let me bathe them with my tears! You're an angel upon earth. I had rather starve in your service, than live with a princess. What can I do to comfort you?

Amelia. Thou faithful creature! only continue to be secret: You know my real character; you know I am in the utmost distress: I have opened
my

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 23

my heart to you; but you will plant a dagger there, if you betray me to the world.

Molly. Ah, my dear mistress, how should I betray you? I go no where, I converse with nobody, but yourself and Mrs. Goodman: Besides, the world is very indifferent about other peoples' misfortunes.

Amelia. The world is indifferent, it is true; but it is curious, and takes a cruel pleasure in tearing open the wounds of the unfortunate.

Enter Mrs. Goodman.

Mrs. Goodman!

Mrs. Good. Excuse me, madam: I took the liberty of waiting on you to receive your commands. 'Tis now near three o'clock. You have provided nothing for dinner, and have scarce taken any refreshment these three days.

Amelia. I have been indisposed.

Mrs. Good. I am afraid you are more than indisposed—You are unhappy—Pardon me! but I cannot help thinking that your fortune is unequal to your appearance.

Amelia. Why should you think so? You never heard me complain of my fortune.

Mrs. Good. No, but I have too much reason to believe it is inferior to your merit.

24 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Amelia. Indeed, you flatter me.

Mrs. Good. Come, come; you must not indulge this melancholy. I have a new lodger, an elderly gentleman, just arrived, who does me the honour to partake of my dinner; and I must have your company too. He seems to be in trouble as well as you. You must meet; two persons in affliction may perhaps become a consolation to each other. Come, let us take some care of you!

Amelia. Be assured, Mrs. Goodman, I am much obliged to you for your attention to me; but I want nothing.

Mrs. Good. Dear madam! you say you want nothing, and you are in want of every thing.

Enter Servant.

Serv. [to *Mrs. Good.*] Lady Alton, madam, sends her compliments, and will wait upon you after dinner.

Mrs. Good. Very well; my best respects to her ladyship, and I shall be ready to attend her. [Exit *Servant.*] There, there is one cause of your uneasiness! Lady Alton's visit is on your account. She thinks you have robbed her of Lord Falbridge's affections, and that is the occasion of her honouring me with her company.

Amelia. Lord Falbridge's affections!

Mrs.

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 23

Mrs. Good. Ah, my dear Amelia, you don't know your power over his heart. You have reconciled it to virtue. But, come! let me prevail on you to come with me to dinner.

Amelia. You must excuse me.

Mrs. Good. Well, well, then I'll send you something to your own apartment. If you have any other commands, pray honour me with them; for I would fain oblige you, if I knew how it were in my power. [Exit.

Manent Amelia and Molly.

Amelia. What an amiable woman! If it had not been for her apparent benevolence and goodness of heart, I should have left the house on Mr. Spatter's coming to lodge in it.

Molly. Lady Alton, it seems, recommended him as a lodger here; so he can be no friend of yours on that account; for to be sure she owes you no good will, on account of my lord Falbridge.

Amelia. No more of lord Falbridge, I beseech you, Molly. How can you persist in mentioning him, when you know that, presuming on my situation, he has dared to affront me with dishonourable proposals?

Molly. Ah, madam! but he sorely repents it, I promise you, and would give his whole estate for

an

26 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

an opportunity of seeing you once more, and getting into your good graces again.

Amelia. No; his ungenerous conduct has thrown him as much below me, as my condition had placed me beneath him. He imagined he had a right to insult my distress; but I will teach him to think it respectable, [Exit.]

A C T II.

SCENE, *An apartment at Mrs. Goodman's.*

Enter lady Alton and Spatter.

Spat. BUT you won't hear me, madam!

L. Alt. I have heard too much, Sir, This wandering *incognita* a woman of virtue! I have no patience.

Spat. Mrs. Goodman pretends to be convinced of her being a person of honour.

L. Alt. A person of honour, and openly receive visits from men! seduce lord Falbridge! No, no; Reserve this character for your next novel, Mr. Spatter! it is an affront to my understanding. I begin to suspect you have betrayed me; you have gone

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 27

gone over to the adverse party, and are in the conspiracy to abuse me.

Spat. I, madam! Neither her beauty, nor her virtue——

L. Alt. Her beauty! her virtue! Why, thou wretch, thou grub of literature! whom I, as a patroness of learning and encourager of men of letters, willing to blow the dead coal of genius, fondly took under my protection, do you remember what I have done for you?

Spat. With the utmost gratitude, madam.

L. Alt. Did not I draw you out of the garret, where you daily spun out your flimsy brain to catch the town flies in your cobweb dissertations? Did not I introduce you to lord Dapperwit, the Apollo of the age? And did not you dedicate your silly volume of Poems on Several Occasions to him? Did not I put you into the list of my visitors, and order my porter to admit you at dinner-time? Did not I write the only scene in your execrable farce, which the audience vouchsafed an hearing? And did not my female friend, Mrs. Melpomene, furnish you with Greek and Latin mottoes for your twopenny essays?

Spat. I acknowledge all your ladyship's goodness to me. I have done every thing in my power to shew my gratitude, and fulfil your ladyship's commands.

L. Alt.

28 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

L. Alt. Words, words, Mr. Spatter ! You have been witness of lord Falbridge's inconstancy. A perfidious man ! false as Phaon to Sappho, or Jason to Medea ! You have seen him desert me for a wretched vagabond ; you have seen me abandoned like Calypso, without making a single effort to recall my faithless Ulysses from the Siren that has lured him from me.

Spat. Be calm but one moment, madam, and I'll——

L. Alt. Bid the sea be calm, when the winds are let loose upon it. I have reason to be enraged. I placed you in genteel apartments in this house, merely to plant you as a spy ; and what have you done for me ? Have you employed your correspondence to any purpose ? or discovered the real character of this infamous woman, this insolent Amelia ?

Spat. I have taken every possible method to detect her. I have watched Amelia herself like a bailiff, or a duenna ; I have overheard private conversations ; have sounded the landlady ; tampered with the servants ; opened letters ; and intercepted messages.

L. Alt. Good creature ! my best Spatter ! And what ? what have you discovered ?

Spat. That Amelia is a native of Scotland ; that
her

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 29

her surname *Walton* is probably not real, but assumed; and that she earnestly wishes to conceal both the place of her birth and her family.

L. Alt. And is that all?

Spat. All that I have been able to learn as yet, madam.

L. Alt. Wretch! of what service have you been then? Are these your boasted talents? When we want to unravel an ambiguous character, you have made out that she wishes to lie concealed; and when we wish to know who she is, you have just discovered that she is a native of Scotland.

Spat. And yet, if you will give me leave, madam, I think I could convince you that these discoveries, blind and unsatisfactory as they may appear to you at first, are of no small consequence.

L. Alt. Of what consequence can they possibly be to me, man?

Spat. I'll tell you, madam. It is a rule in politics, when we discover something to add something more. Something added to something, makes a good deal; upon this basis I have formed a syllogism.

L. Alt. What does the pedant mean? A syllogism!

Spat. Yes, a syllogism; as for example: Any person

person who is a native of Scotland, and wishes to be concealed, must be an enemy to the government. Amelia is a native of Scotland, and wishes to be concealed. *Ergo*, Amelia is an enemy to the government.

L. Alt. Excellent ! admirable logick ! but I wish we could prove it to be truth.

Spat. I would not lay a wager of the truth of it ; but I would swear it.

L. Alt. What, on a proper occasion, and in a proper place, my good Spatter ?

Spat. Willingly ; we must make use of what we know, and even of what we don't know. Truth is of a dry and simple nature, and stands in need of some little ornament. A lie, indeed, is infamous ; but fiction, your ladyship, who deals in poetry, knows is beautiful.

L. Alt. But the substance of your fiction, Spatter ?

Spat. I will lodge an information that the father of Amelia is a disaffected person, and has sent her to London for treasonable purposes ; nay, I can upon occasion even suppose the father himself to be in London : In consequence of which you will probably recover lord Falbridge, and Amelia will be committed to prison.

L. Alt.

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 31

L. Alt. You have given me new life. I took you for a mere flatterer of paper; but I have found you a Machiavel.—I hear somebody coming.—Mrs. Goodman has undertaken to send Amelia hither. Ha! she's here! Away, Spatter, and wait for me at my house: You must dine with me; and after dinner, like true politicians, we will settle our plan of operations over our coffee. Away, away, this instant!

[*Exit Spatter.*]

Lady Alton alone.

A convenient engine this Mr. Spatter: The most impudent thorough-paced knave in the three kingdoms! with the heart of Zoilus, the pen of Mævius, and the tongue of Therpsites. I was sure he would stick at nothing. The writings of authors are publick advertisements of their qualifications; and when they profess to live upon scandal, it is as much as to say, that they are ready for every other dirty work, in which we chuse to employ them. But now for Amelia! If she proves tractable, I may forego the use of this villain, who almost makes me hate my triumph, and be ashamed of my revenge.

Enter Amelia.

Amelia. Mrs. Goodman has informed me that your ladyship has desired to see me: I wait your commands, madam.

L. Alt.

32 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

L. Alt. Look you, young woman : I am sensible how much it is beneath a person of my rank, to parley with one of your condition. For once, however, I am content to wave all ceremony ; and if you behave as you ought to do, you have nothing to fear, child.

Amelia. I hope I have never behaved otherwise than as I ought to do, madam.

L. Alt. Yes ; you have received the visits of lord Falbridge ; you have endeavoured to estrange his affections from me : But, if you encourage him in his infidelity to me, tremble for the consequence ! Be advised, or you are ruined.

Amelia. I am conscious of no guilt, and know no fear, madam.

L. Alt. Come, come, Mrs. Amelia, this high strain is out of character with me. Act over your Clelia, and Cleopatra, and Cassandra, at a proper time ; and let me talk in the stile of nature and common sense to you. You have no lord Falbridge, no weak young nobleman, to impose upon at present.

Amelia. To impose upon ! I scorn the imputation, and am sorry to find that your ladyship came hither, merely to indulge yourself in the cruel pleasure of insulting one of the unhappiest of her sex.

[Weeping.

L. Alt.

L. Alt. You are mistaken; I came hither to concert measures for your happiness, to assist your poverty, and relieve your distress. Leave this house; leave London; I will provide you a retirement in the country, and supply all your wants. Only renounce all thoughts of lord Falbridge, and never let him know the place of your retreat.

Amelia. Lord Falbridge! what is lord Falbridge to me, madam?

L. Alt. To convince me you have no commerce with him, accept of my proposals.

Amelia. No, madam; the favours which you intend me, I could not receive without blushing. I have no wants but what I can supply myself; no distresses which your ladyship can relieve; and I will seek no refuge but in my own virtue.

L. Alt. Your virtue! Ridiculous! If you are a woman of virtue, what is the meaning of all this mystery? Who are you? what are you? who will vouch for your character?

Amelia. It wants no vouchers; nor will I suffer myself to be arraigned like a criminal, till I know by what authority you take upon you to act as my judge.

L. Alt. Matchless confidence! Yes, yes, it is too plain! I see you are the very creature I took

34 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

you for ; a mere adventurer ! Some strolling princess, that are perhaps more frugal of your favours than the rest of your sisterhood, merely to enhance the price of them.

Amelia. Hold, madam ! This opprobrious language is more injurious to your own honour than to mine. I see the violence of your temper, and will leave you. But you may one day know that my birth is equal to your own ; my heart is perhaps more generous ; and whatever may be my situation, I scorn to be dependant on any body ; much less on one, who has so mean an opinion of me, and who considers me as her rival. [*Exit.*]

Lady Alton alone.

Her rival ! Unparalleled insolence ! An open avowal of her competition with me ! Yes ; I see Spatter must be employed. Her rival ! I shall burst with indignation !

Enter Mrs. Goodman.

L. Alt. Mrs. Goodman ! where is Mr. Spatter ?

Mrs. Good. He went out the moment he left your ladyship. But you seem disordered ; shall I get you some hartshorn, madam ?

L. Alt. Some poison.—Rival ! I shall choke with rage.—You shall hear from me. You, and your
Amelia.

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 35

Amelia. You have abused me; you have conspired against my peace; and be assured you shall suffer for it! [Exit.

Mrs. Goodman alone.

What a violent woman! Her passion makes her forget what is due to her sex and quality. Ha! Mr. Freeport!

Enter Freeport.

My best friend! welcome to London! When did you arrive from Lisbon?

Free. But last night.

Mrs. Good. I hope you have had a pleasant voyage?

Free. A good trading voyage—I have got money, but I have got the spleen too.—Have you any news in town?

Mrs. Good. None at all, Sir.

Free. So much the better. The less news, the less nonsense.—But what strange lady have you had here? I met her as I was coming up: She rushed by like a fury, and almost swept me down stairs again with the wind of her hoop-petticoat.

Mrs. Good. Ah! Jealousy! Jealousy is a terrible passion; especially in a woman's breast, Mr. Freeport.

36 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Free. Jealousy! Why, she is not jealous of you, Mrs. Goodman?

Mrs. Good. No; but of a lodger of mine.

Free. Have you any new lodgers since I left you?

Mrs. Good. Two or three, Sir; the last arrived but to-day; an elderly gentleman, who will see no company.

Free. He's in the right. • Three parts in four of mankind are knaves or fools; and the fourth part live by themselves.—But who are your other lodgers?

Mrs. Good. An author, and a lady.

Free. I hate authors. Who is the lady?

Mrs. Good. She calls herself Amelia Walton; but I believe that name is not her real one.

Free. Not her real one! Why, sure she is a woman of character?

Mrs. Good. A woman of character! She is an angel. She is most miserably poor; and yet haughty to an excess.

Free. Pride and poverty! A sad composition, Mrs. Goodman.

Mrs. Good. No, Sir; her pride is one of her greatest virtues: It consists in depriving herself of almost all necessaries, and concealing it from the world. Though every action speaks her to be a
woman

woman of birth and education, she lives upon the work of her own hands, without murmur or complaint. I make use of a thousand stratagems to assist her, against her will; I prevail on her to keep the money due for rent for her support, and furnish her with every thing she wants at half its prime cost; but if she perceives or suspects these little artifices, she takes it almost as ill as if I had attempted to defraud her. In short, Sir, her unshaken virtue and greatness of soul under misfortunes, make me consider her as a prodigy, and often draw tears of pity and admiration from me.

Free. Ah! womens' tears lie very near their eyes. I never cried in my life; and yet I can feel too; I can admire, I can esteem, but what signifies whimpering? Hark ye, Mrs. Goodman! This is a very extraordinary account you give of this young woman; you have raised my curiosity, and I'll go and see this lodger of yours; I am rather out of spirits, and it will serve to amuse me.

Mrs. Good. Oh, Sir, you can't see her; she neither pays visits nor receives them, but lives in the most retired manner in the world.

Free. So much the better. I love retirement as well as she. Where are her apartments?

38 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Mrs. Good. On this very floor, on the other side of the staircase.

Free. I'll go and see her immediately.

Mrs. Good. Indeed you can't, Sir. It is impossible.

Free. Impossible! where is the impossibility of going into a room? Come along!

Mrs. Good. For Heaven's sake, Mr. Freeport!

Free. Pshaw! I have no time to lose; I have business half an hour hence.

Mrs. Good. But won't it be rather indelicate, Sir? Let me prepare her first!

Free. Prepare her? With all my heart. But remember that I am a man of business, Mrs. Goodman, and have no time to waste in ceremony and compliment. [Exeunt,

Amelia's apartment.

Amelia at work, and Molly.

Amelia. No, Polly! If lord Falbridge comes again, I am resolved not to see him.

Molly. Indeed, madam, he loves you above all the world; I am sure of it; and I verily believe he will run mad, if you don't hear what he has to say for himself.

Amelia. Speak no more of him,

Enter

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 39

Enter Mrs. Goodman.

Mrs. Goodman!

Mrs. Good. Pardon me, madam! here is a gentleman of my acquaintance begs you would give him leave to speak with you.

Amelia. A gentleman! who is he?

Mrs. Good. His name is Freeport, Madam. He has a few particularities; but he is the best-hearted man in the world. Pray let him come in, madam!

Amelia. By no means; you know I receive visits from nobody.

Enter Freeport.

Bless me! he's here. This is very extraordinary, indeed, Mrs. Goodman.

Free. Don't disturb yourself, young woman; don't disturb yourself!

Molly. Mighty free and easy, methinks!

Amelia. Excuse me, Sir; I am not used to receive visits from persons entirely unknown.

Free. Unknown! There is not a man in all London better known than I am. I am a merchant, my name is Freeport; Freeport of Crutched-Friars: enquire upon 'Change!

Amelia. Mrs. Goodman! I never saw the gentleman before. I am surpris'd at his coming here.

D 4

Free.

40 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Free. Pho, prithee!—Mrs. Goodman knows me well enough. [*Mrs. Goodman talks apart with Amelia.*] Ay! that's right, Mrs. Goodman. Let her know who I am, and tell her to make herself easy.

Mrs. Good. But the lady does not chuse we should trouble her, Sir.

Free. Trouble her? I'll give her no trouble; I came to drink a dish of tea with you; let your maid get it ready, and we will have it here instead of your parlour. In the mean time I will talk with this lady; I have something to say to her.

Amelia. If you had any business, Sir—

Free. Business! I tell you I have very particular business; so sit down, and let's have the tea.

Mrs. Good. You should not have followed me so soon, Sir.

Free. Pho, prithee! [*Exit Mrs. Goodman.*

Molly. This is the oddest man I ever saw in my life.

Amelia. Well, Sir, as I see you are a particular acquaintance of Mrs. Goodman—But pray what are your commands for me, Sir? [*They sit.*

Free. I tell you what, young woman; I am a plain man, and will tell you my mind in an instant. I am told that you are one of the best women in
the

the world; very virtuous, and very poor; I like you for that: But they say you are excessively proud too; now I don't like you for that, madam.

Molly. Free and easy still, I see.

Amelia. And pray, Sir, who told you so?

Free. Mrs. Goodman.

Amelia. She has deceived you, Sir; not in regard to my pride, perhaps, for there is a certain right pride which every body, especially women, ought to possess; and as to virtue, it is no more than my duty: But as to poverty, I disclaim it; they who want nothing, cannot be said to be poor.

Free. It is no such thing: You don't speak the truth; and that is worse than being proud. I know very well that you are as poor as Job, that you are in want of common necessaries, and don't make a good meal above once in a fortnight.

Molly. My mistress fasts for her health, Sir.

Free. Hold your tongue, huffy! What, are you proud too?

Molly. Lord, what a strange man!

Free. But however, madam, proud or not proud, does not signify twopence. Hark ye, young woman, it is a rule with me (as it ought to be with every good Christian) to give a tenth part of my fortune in charity. In the account of my profits,
there

42 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

there stands at present the sum of two thousand pounds on the credit side of my books; so that I am two hundred pounds in arrear. This I look upon as a debt due from my fortune to your poverty. Yes, your poverty, I say, so never deny it. There's a bank-note for two hundred pounds; and now I am out of your debt. Where the deuce is this tea, I wonder?

Molly. I never saw such a man in my life.

Amelia. I don't know that I ever was so thoroughly confounded. [*Apart.*—Sir! [*To Freeport.* *Free.* Well?

Amelia. This noble action has surprised me still more than your conversation, but you must excuse my refusal of your kindness; for I must confess, that if I were to accept what you offer, I don't know when I should be able to restore it.

Free. Restore it! why, who wants you to restore it? I never dreamt of restitution.

Amelia. I feel, I feel your goodness to the bottom of my soul; but you must excuse me. I have no occasion for your bounty; take your note, Sir, and bestow it where it is wanted.

Molly. Lord, madam! you are ten times stranger than the gentleman. I tell you what, Sir; [*to Freeport*] it does not signify talking; we are in the
greatest

greatest distress in the world, and if it had not been for the kindness and good-nature of Mrs. Goodman, we might have died by this time. My lady has concealed her distress from every body that was willing and able to relieve her; you have come to the knowledge of it in spite of her teeth; and I hope that you will oblige her, in spite of her teeth, to accept of your generous offer.

Amelia. No more, my dear Polly; if you would not have me die with shame, say no more! Return the gentleman his note, with my best thanks for his kindness; tell him, I durst not accept of it; for when a woman receives presents from a man, the world will always suspect that she pays for them at the expence of her virtue.

Free. What's that? what does she say, child?

Molly. Lord, Sir, I hardly know what she says. She says, that when a gentleman makes a young lady presents, he is always supposed to have a design upon her virtue.

Free. Nonsense! why should she suspect me of an ungenerous design, because I do a generous action?

Molly. Do you hear, madam?

Amelia. Yes, I hear; I admire; but I must persist in my refusal: If that scandalous fellow Spatter were

44 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

were to hear of this, he would stick at saying nothing.

Free. Eh! what's that?

Molly. She is afraid you should be taken for her lover, Sir.

Free. I for your lover! not I. I never saw you before. I don't love you; so make no scruples upon that account; I like you well enough, but I don't love you at all; not at all, I tell you. If you have a mind never to see my face any more, good bye t'ye! you shall never see me any more; if you like I should come back again, I'll come back again. But I lose time; I have business; your servant!
[*Going.*]

Amelia. Stay, Sir! do not leave me without receiving the sincerest acknowledgments of my gratitude and esteem; but, above all, receive your note again, and do not put me any longer to the blush!

Free. The woman is a fool!

Enter Mrs. Goodman.

Amelia. Come hither, I beseech you, Mrs. Goodman.

Mrs. Good. Your pleasure, madam!

Amelia. Here! take this note, which that gentleman

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 45

man has given me by mistake; return it to him, I charge you! assure him of my esteem and admiration; but let him know I need no assistance, and cannot accept it. [Exit.

Manent Freeport, &c.

Mrs. Good. Ah! Mr. Freeport! you have been at your old trade. You are always endeavouring to do good actions in secret; but the world always finds you out, you see.

Molly. Well, I don't believe there are two stranger people in England than my mistress, and that gentleman; one so ready to part with money; and the other so unwilling to receive it. But don't believe her, Sir; for, between friends, she is in very great need of assistance, I assure you.

Mrs. Good. Indeed I believe so.

Free. Oh, I have no doubt on't; so I'll tell you what, Mrs. Goodman; keep the note, and supply her wants out of it without her knowledge; and, now I think of it, that way is better than t'other.

Molly. I never saw such a strange man in my life. [Exit.

Mrs. Good. I shall obey your kind commands, Sir. Poor soul! my heart bleeds for her; her virtue and misfortunes touch me to the soul.

Free.

46 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Free. I have some little feeling for her too; but she is too proud. A fine face; fine figure; well behaved; well bred; and I dare say an excellent heart!—But she is too proud; tell her so, d'ye hear? tell her she is too proud. I shall be too late for my business—I'll see her again soon—It is a pity she is so proud. *[Exeunt.]*

A C T III.

Scene, a hall.

Sir William Douglas alone.

A YOUNG woman! a native of Scotland! her name Amelia! supposed to be in the greatest distress, and living in total retirement! If fortune should for once smile upon me, and have thrown me into the very same house! I don't know what to think of it; and yet so many uncommon circumstances together recall the memory of my misfortunes, and awaken all the father in my bosom.—I must be satisfied.

Enter Molly, crossing the stage.

Sir Will. Madam! will you permit me to speak one word to you?

Molly.

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 47

Molly. [*coming forward.*] If you please. What is your pleasure, Sir?

Sir Will. I presume, Madam, you are the charming young woman I heard of?

Molly. I have a few charms in the eyes of some folks, to be sure, Sir.

Sir Will. And you are a native of Scotland, they tell me?

Molly. I am, at your service, Sir.

Sir Will. Will you give me leave to ask the name of your family? Who is your father?

Molly. I really don't remember my father.

Sir Will. Ha! not remember him, do you say?

[*Earnestly.*]

Molly. No, Sir; but I have been told that he was——

Sir Will. Who, madam?

Molly. One of the most eminent bakers in Aberdeen, Sir.

Sir Will. Oh, I conceive! You live, I suppose, with the young lady I meant to speak to. I mistook you for the lady herself.

Molly. You did me a great deal of honour, I assure you, Sir.

Sir Will. But you are acquainted with your mistress's family?

Molly.

48 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Molly. Family, Sir!

Sir Will. Ay; who are her parents?

Molly. She comes of very creditable parents, I promise you, Sir.

Sir Will. I don't doubt it; but who are they? I have particular reasons for enquiring.

Molly. Very likely so; but I must beg to be excused, Sir.

Sir Will. Of what age is your mistress? You will tell me that at least.

Molly. Oh, as to her age, she don't care who knows that; she is too young to deny her age yet a-while. She is about one-and-twenty, Sir.

Sir Will. Precisely the age of my Amelia! [*apart.* One-and-twenty, you say?

Molly. Yes, Sir; and I am about two-and-twenty; there is no great difference between us.

Sir Will. [*apart.*] It must be so; her age, her country, her manner of living, all concur to prove her mine; my dear child, whom I left to taste of misfortune from her cradle!

Molly. [*apart.*] What is he muttering, I wonder! I wish this one-and-twenty has not turned the old gentleman's head.

Sir

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 49

Sir Will. Let me beg the favour of you to conduct me to your mistress: I want to speak with her.

Molly. She will see no company, Sir; she is indisposed; she is in great affliction; and receives no visits at all.

Sir Will. Mine is not a visit of form or ceremony, or even impertinent curiosity; but on the most urgent business. Tell her I am her fellow-countryman.

Molly. What! are you of Scotland too, Sir?

Sir Will. I am. Tell her I take part in her afflictions, and may, perhaps, bring her some consolation.

Molly. There is something mighty particular about this old gentleman! He has not brought another two hundred pounds, sure! [*Apart.*] Well, Sir; since you are so very pressing, since you say you are our fellow-countryman, if you will walk this way, I'll speak to my mistress, and see what I can do for you.

Sir Will. I am obliged to you. [*Exit Molly.*] And now, if I may trust the forebodings of an old fond heart, I am going to throw my arms about my daughter. [*Exit.*]

50 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

*As Sir William follows Molly out on one side,
Spatter appears on the other.*

Spatter alone.

There they go! what the deuce can that old fellow and Amelia's maid do together? The slut is certainly conducting him to her mistress! In less than half an hour I expect that Amelia will be apprehended. In the mean time, I must be upon the watch; for, since I have laid the information, it is high time that I should collect some materials to support it.—Who comes here? Lord Falbridge's valet de chambre: His errand is to Amelia, without doubt; something may be learnt there, perhaps.

Enter La France.

Ha! Monsieur la France! your servant.

La. Fr. Serviteur! ver glad to see you, monsieur Spatter.

Spat. Well; what brings you here? eh, monsieur La France?

La. Fr. Von lettre, monsieur.

Spat. A letter to whom?

La. Fr. From mi lor to Mademoiselle Amelie.

Spat. Oh, you're mistaken, monsieur; that letter is for lady Alton.

La. Fr. Lady Alton! no, *ma foi!* it be for Mademoiselle.

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 51

Mademoiselle. I am no mistake. *Je ne me trompe pas là dessus.*

Spat. Why, have not you carried several letters from lord Falbridge to lady Alton?

La. Fr. *Oh, que oui!* but dis he for de young laty dat lif here; for Mademoiselle: Mi lor lov her! *ma foi*; he lov her *à la folie*.

Spat. And he loved lady Alton *à la folie*, did not he?

La. Fr. *Oh, que non!* he lov her so gently! *si tranquillement*; *ma foi*, he lov her *à la Françoisse*. But now he lov Mademoiselle; he no eat, no sleep, no speak, but Mademoiselle; no tink but of Mademoiselle; quite an oder ting, monsieur Spatter, quite an oder ting!

Spat. Well, well; no matter for that; the letter is for lady Alton, I promise you.

La. Fr. *Ab! pardonnez moi!*

Spat. It is, I assure you; and to convince you of it, see here, monsieur! Lady Alton has sent you five guineas to pay the postage.

La. Fr. Five guinees! *ma foi*, I believe I was mistake, indeed.

Spat. Ay, ay; I told you you were mistaken: And after all, if it should not be for her ladyship, she will enclose it in another case, and send it to Amelia, and nobody will be the wiser.

52 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

La. Fr. Fort bien ; ver well ; *la voila.* [*gives the letter.*] I have got five guinees ; I don't care.

Spat. Why should you ? Where's the harm, if one woman should receive a letter written to another ? There will be nothing lost by it ; for if Amelia don't receive this, she will receive others ; and letters of this sort are all alike, you know.

La. Fr. Begar dat is ver true. Adieu, Sir.—
I have execute my commission : Adieu. *Oh ! je fais bien mes commissions, moi !* [*Exit.*

Spat alone.

See the effects of secret-service-money ! Intelligence must be paid for ; and the bribing couriers is a fair stratagem, by all the laws of war. Shall I break open this letter ; or carry it to lady Alton as it is ? No ; I'll read it myself, that I may have the credit of communicating the contents. Let me see ! [*opens the letter and reads.*] “ Thou dear-
“ est, most respectable, and most virtuous of wo-
“ men ! ” So ! this is *à la folie*, indeed, as monsieur la France calls it.—“ If any consideration could
“ add to my remorse, for the injury I have offered
“ you, it would be the discovery of your real
“ character.” Ah, ah ! “ I know who you are.
“ I know you are the daughter of the unhappy
“ Sir William Douglas.” So, so ! “ Judge then
“ of

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 53

“ of the tumult of my soul ; which is only pre-
 “ served from the horrors of despair, by the
 “ hopes of rendering some service to the father,
 “ which may, perhaps, in some measure atone
 “ for my behaviour to his too-justly offended
 “ daughter. Give me leave, this evening, to sue
 “ for my pardon at your feet, and to inform you
 “ of the measures I have taken. In the mean time,
 “ believe me unalterably yours. Falbridge.”
 This is a precious packet, indeed.—Now if I
 could discover the father too!—His lordship’s
 visit will be too late in the evening, I fancy ; the
 lady will not be at home ; but, before she goes,
 once more to my old trade of eaves-dropping
 about her apartments ! The old gentleman and she
 are certainly together, and their conversation per-
 haps may be curious. At all events, lady Alton
 must be gratified. Men of letters never get any
 thing of their patrons, but by sacrificing to their
 foibles. [Exit.

Amelia’s apartment.

Sir William Douglas and Amelia discovered sitting.

Sir Will. Every word you utter, touches me to
 the soul. Nothing but such noble sentiments
 could have supported your spirit under so many
 misfortunes.

Amelia. Perhaps it is to my misfortunes that I

owe those sentiments; had I been brought up in ease and luxury, my mind, which has learnt fortitude from distress, might have been enfeebled by prosperity.

Sir Will. Thou most amiable of thy sex, I conjure thee to hide nothing from me. You say you were born at Aberdeen; you confess that you are derived from one of those unhappy families, who suffered themselves to be so fatally deluded, and drawn from their allegiance to the best of kings. Why, why then, will you not tell me all? Why do you endeavour to conceal your name and family?

Amelia. My duty to my family obliges me to silence. My father's life is forfeited by the sentence of the law; and he owes his existence at this hour to flight or secrecy. He may be in England; he may, for aught I know, be in London; and the divulging my name and family might create a fresh search after him, and expose him to new perils. Your conversation, it is true, has inspired me with respect and tenderness; but yet you are a stranger to me: I have reason to fear every thing, and one word may undo me.

Sir Will. Alas! one word may make us both happy. Tell me; of what age were you, when your cruel fortune separated you from your father?

Amelia.

Amelia. An infant ; so young, that I have not the least traces of him in my memory.

Sir Will. And your mother ; what became of her ?

Amelia. She, as I have often heard, was carried off by a fever, while she was preparing to embark with me, to follow the fortunes of my father. He, driven almost to despair by this last stroke of ill fortune, continually shifted his place of residence abroad ; but for some years past, whether by his death, the miscarriage of letters, the infidelity of friends, or other accidents, I have not received the least intelligence of him ; and now I almost begin to despair of hearing of him again, tho' I still persist in my enquiries.

Sir Will. [*rising.*] It must be so ; it is as I imagined. All these touching circumstances are melancholy witnesses of the truth of it. Yes, my child ! I am that unhappy father, whom you lost so early ; I am that unfortunate husband, whom death and my unhappy fate, almost at the very same period, divorced from the best of wives ; I am Sir William Douglas.

Amelia. Sir William Douglas ! Have I lived to see my father ? then Heaven has heard my prayers ! This is the first happy moment of my unfortunate

56 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

life. [*embracing.*].—And yet your presence here fills me with apprehensions; I tremble for your safety, for your life; how durst you venture your person in this kingdom? how can you expose yourself to the danger of discovery in this town? My whole soul is in a tumult of fear and joy.

Sir Will. Do not be alarmed, my Amelia; fear nothing; Heaven begins to smile upon my fortune. To find thee so unexpectedly, to find thee with a mind so superior to distress, softens the anguish of my past life, and gives me happy omens of the future.

Amelia. Oh, Sir! by the joy I receive from the embraces of a father, let me conjure you to provide for your safety! do not expose me to the horror of losing you again; of losing you for ever! Quit this town immediately; every moment that you remain in it, is at the hazard of your life; I am ready to accompany you to any part of the world.

Sir Will. My dear child! how I grieve that your youth and virtue should be involved in my misfortunes! Yes, we will quit this kingdom; prepare for your departure, and we may leave London this evening.

Enter

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 57

Enter Owen hastily.

Ha! Owen! thou art come at a happy moment. I have found my daughter. This is your young mistress, the paragon of her sex, my dear, my amiable Amelia!

Owen. Oh, Sir, this is no time for congratulation. You are in the most imminent danger.

Sir Will. What is the matter?

Owen. The officers of government are at this instant in the house. I saw them enter; I heard them say they had authority to apprehend some suspected person, and I ran immediately to inform you of your danger.

Amelia. Oh, Heaven! My father, what will you do?

Owen. Do not be alarmed, Sir; we are two; we are armed; and we may perhaps be able to make our way through them; I will stand by you to the last drop of my blood.

Sir Will. Thou faithful creature! Stay, Owen; our fears may betray us; till we are sure we are attacked, let us shew no signs of opposition!

Enter Molly, hastily.

Molly. My dear mistress! we are ruined; we are undone for ever.

Amelia,

58 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Amelia. There are officers of justice in the house ; I have heard it : tell me, tell me this instant, whom do they seek for ?

Molly. For you, madam ; for you ; they have a warrant to apprehend you, they say.

Amelia. But they have no warrant to apprehend any body else ?

Molly. No, madam ; nobody else ; but I will follow you to the end of the world.

Amelia. My dear Polly, I did not mean *you*. Retire, Sir ! [*to Sir William.*] For heaven's leave me to their mercy ; they can have no facts against me ; my life has been as innocent as unfortunate, and I must soon be released.

Sir Will. No, my child ; I will not leave thee.

Molly. My child ? This is Sir William Douglas then, as sure as I am alive !

Sir Will. Besides, retiring at such a time might create suspicion, and incur the danger we would wish to avoid.

Molly. They will be in the room in a moment ; I think I hear them upon the stairs ; they would have been here before me, if Mr. Freeport had not come in and stopt them.

Sir Will. Courage, my dear Amelia !

Amelia. Alas, Sir ? I have no terrors but for you.

Owen.

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 59

Owen. They are here, Sir.

Molly. Oh, lord ! here they are, indeed ! I am frighted out of my wits.

Enter Mrs. Goodman, Freeport, and Officer.

Free. A warrant to seize her ? a harmless young woman ? it is impossible.

Officer. Pardon me, Sir ; if the young lady goes by the name of Amelia Walton, I have a warrant to apprehend her.

Free. On what account ?

Officer. As a dangerous person.

Free. Dangerous !

Officer. Yes, Sir ; suspected of disaffection and treasonable practices.

Amelia. I am the unhappy object of your search, Sir ; give me leave to know the substance of the accusation.

Officer. I cannot tell you particulars, madam ; but information upon oath has been made against you, and I am ordered to apprehend you.

Mrs. Good. But you will accept of bail, Sir ? I will be bound for all I am worth in the world.

Officer. In these cases, madam, bail is not usual ; and if ever accepted at all, it is excessively high ;
and

60 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

and given by persons of very large property, and known character.

Free. Well; my property is large enough, and my character very well known. My name is Freeport.

Officer. I know you very well, Sir.

Free. I'll answer for her appearance; I'll be bound in a penalty of five hundred pounds, a thousand, two thousand, or what sum you please.

Officer. And will you enter into the recognisance immediately?

Free. With all my heart; come along! [*Going.*]

Officer. And are you in earnest, Sir?

Free. Ay, to be sure. Why not?

Officer. Because, Sir, I'll venture to say there are but few people, that place their money on such securities.

Free. So much the worse! he who can employ it in doing good, places it on the best security, and puts it out at the highest interest in the world.

[*Exit with the Officer.*]

Manent Sir William Douglas, &c.

Sir Will. I can hardly trust my eyes and ears; who is this benevolent gentleman?

Mrs.

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 61

Mrs. Good. I don't wonder you are surpris'd at Mr. Freeport's manner of proceeding, Sir; but it is his way. He is not a man of compliment; but he does the most essential service, in less time than others take in making protestations.

Molly. Here he is again; heaven reward him!

Re-enter Freeport.

Free. So! that matter is dispatched; now to our other affairs! this is a busy day with me.—Look-ye, Sir William, we must be brief; there is no time to be lost.

Sir Will. How! am I betrayed then?

Free. Betrayed! no; but you are discovered.

Owen. What! my master discovered!

[Offers to draw.]

Free. *[to Owen.]* Nay, never clap thy hand to thy sword, old Trusty! your master is in danger, it is true; but not from me, I promise you. Go, and get him a post-chaise; and let him pack off this instant; that is the best way of shewing your attachment to him at present.—Twenty years, Sir William, have not made so great an alteration in you, but I knew you the moment I saw you.

Mrs. Good. Harbour no distrust of Mr. Freeport, Sir; he is one of the worthiest men living.

Amelia.

62 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Amelia. I know his worthiness. His behaviour to the officer but this moment, uncommonly generous as it appeared, is not the first testimony he has given me to-day, of his noble disposition.

Free. Noble ! pshaw ! nonsense !

Sir Will. [*to Freeport.*] Sir ; the kind manner in which you have been pleased to interest yourself in my affairs, has almost as much overpowered me, as if you had surpris'd me with hostile proceedings. Which way shall I thank you for your goodness to me and my Amelia ?

Free. Don't thank me at all ; when you are out of danger, perhaps I may make a proposal to you, that will not be disagreeable ; at present, think of nothing but your escape ; for I should not be surpris'd, if they were very shortly to make you the same compliment they have paid to Amelia : and in your case, which is really a serious one, they might not be in the humour to accept of my recognisance.

Mrs. Good. Mr. Freeport is in the right, Sir ; every moment of delay is hazardous ; let us prevail upon you to depart immediately ! Amelia being wholly innocent, cannot be long detained in custody, and as soon as she is released, I will bring her to you, wherever you shall appoint.

Free.

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 63

Free. Ay, ay, you must be gone directly, Sir ;
and as you may want ready money upon the road,
take my purse ! *[Offering his purse.]*

Sir Will. No, thou truest friend, I have no need
of it. With what wonderful goodness have you
acted towards me and my unhappy family !

Free. Wonderful ! why wonderful ? Would
not you have done the same, if you had been in
my place ?

Sir Will. I hope I should.

Free. Well then, where is the wonder of it ?
Come, come, let us see you make ready for your
departure !

Sir Will. Thou best of men !

Free. Best of men ? Heaven forbid ! I have
done no more than my duty by you. I am a man
myself ; and am bound to be a friend to all man-
kind, you know. *[Exeunt.]*

A C T

A C T IV.

SCENE, *Spatter's apartment.*

Lady Alton with a letter in her hand, and Spatter.

Lady Alton.

THANKS, my good Spatter, many thanks for this precious epistle! more precious at present than one of Ovid, Pliny, or Cicero. It is at once a billet-doux and a state paper; and serves at the same time to convict her of conspiring against me and the publick.

Spat. It is a valuable manuscript, to be sure, madam; and yet that is but the least half of my discoveries, since I left your ladyship.

L. Alt. But is not this half, according to the Grecian axiom, more than the whole, Mr. Spatter?

Spat. When you know the whole, I believe you will think not, madam.

L. Alt. Out with it then! I am impatient to be mistress of it.

Spat. By intercepting this letter of lord Falbridge's, your ladyship sees that we have discovered Amelia to be the daughter of Sir William Douglas.

L. Alt.

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 65

L. Alt. True.

Spat. But what would you say, madam, if I had found out the father himself too?

L. Alt. Sir William Douglas!

Spat. Is now in this house, madam.

L. Alt. Impossible!

Spat. Nothing more certain. He arrived this morning, under a feigned name. I saw him conducted to Amelia's apartment. This raised my suspicion, and I planted myself at her door, with all the circumspection of a spy, and address of a chambermaid. There I overheard their mutual acknowledgments of each other; and a curious interview it was. First they wept for grief; and then they wept for joy; and then they wept for grief again. Their tears, however, were soon interrupted by the arrival of the officer, whose purpose was partly defeated, as you have already heard, by the intervention of Freeport.

L. Alt. Yes; the brute! But that delay was not half so unfortunate, as your discoveries have been happy, Spatter; for my revenge shall now return on them with redoubled fury. Issue out upon them once more; see what they are about; and be sure to give me immediate notice if lord Falbridge should come.

[*Going.*

VOL. II.

F

Spat.

66 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Spat. Stay, madam. After intercepting the letter, I sent for your ladyship, that at so critical a juncture, you might be present on the spot: and if you go home again, we shall lose time, which perhaps may be precious, in running to and fro. Suppose you step into the study, till I return. You will find my own answer to my last pamphlet, and the two first sheets of the next month's magazine, to amuse you.

L. Alt. Planned like a wise general! Do you then go, and *reconnoitre* the enemy, while I lie here in ambush to reinforce you as soon as there shall be occasion. Do but give the word, we'll make a vigorous sally, put their whole body to rout, and take Amelia and her father prisoners.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

A ball.

Freeport alone.

I don't know how it is; but this Amelia here runs in my head strangely. Ever since I saw her, I think of nothing else. I am not in love with her. In love with her! that's nonsense. But I feel a kind of uneasiness, a sort of pain that—I don't know what to make of it—I'll speak to her father about her.

Enter

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 67

Enter Owen.

Well, old True-penny! Have you prepared every thing for Sir William's departure?

Owen. We had need be going, indeed, Sir; we are in continual danger while we stay here. Who d'ye think lodged the information against madam Amelia?

Free. Who?

Owen. A person who lodges in this very house, it seems: One Mr. Spatter, Sir.

Free. Spatter! how d'ye know?

Owen. I had it from one of the officers who came to apprehend her.

Free. A dog! I could find in my heart to cut off his ears with my own hands, and save him the disgrace of the pillory.

Owen. My poor master is always unfortunate. If lord Brumpton had lived a week longer, Sir William might perhaps have been out of the reach of their malice.

Free. Lord Brumpton?

Owen. Yes, Sir. He was soliciting my master's pardon; but died before he had accomplished his benevolent intentions.

Free. Ha! a thought strikes me. [*Apart.*] Hark

68 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

ye, friend, [*to Owen*] does Sir William know the present Lord Brumpton?

Owen. No, Sir. The late lord had no children, or near relations, living; and, indeed, he was the only surviving friend of my poor master in the kingdom.

Free. Is the chaise at the door?

Owen. Not yet, Sir; but I expect it every moment.

Free. Run to your master, and desire him not to go till I see him. Tell him I am going out upon his business, and will be back within this hour.

Owen. I will let him know immediately. Ah, you're a true friend indeed, Sir.

[*Shaking him earnestly by the hand.*]

Free. Pho, prithee!

Owen. Ah! Heaven preserve you! [*Exit.*]

Freeport alone.

Fare thee well, old Honesty! By the death of lord Brumpton, without children or near relations living, as Owen says, the title and estate come to my old friend Jack Brumpton, of Liverpoole; who is of a distant branch; a fortieth cousin, for aught I know; who has past his whole life in a counting-house; and who, a few years ago, no
more

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 89

more dreamt of being a lord, than grand signior, or great mogul. He has so good a heart, that I believe it is impossible even for a title to corrupt it. I know he is in town; so I'll go to him immediately; acquaint him with the obligation entailed on him, to be of service to Sir William; and make him heir to the benevolence of his predecessor, as well as his wealth and dignity. [*Going, stops.*] Who's here! Mrs. Goodman and Spatter, as I live! Oh, the dog! my blood rises at the villain. If I don't take care, I shall incur an action of battery for caning the rascal.

Enter Mrs. Goodman and Spatter.

Mrs. Good. In short, Mr. Spatter, I must beg leave to give you warning, and desire that you would provide yourself with another lodging as soon as possible.

Spat. What now? what the deuce is the matter with you, Mrs. Goodman?

Mrs. Good. I see now the meaning of lady Alton's recommendation of such a lodger to my house, as well as of her visits to Amelia, and her frequent conferences with you, Sir.

Spat. The woman is certainly out of her senses.

Free. What has been laid to your charge is no joke, Sir.

Spat. What! are you there to keep up her back-hand, Mr. Freeport? What is all this?

Free. You are found out to be a spy, Sir.

Mrs. Good. A person who pries into the secrets of families, merely to betray them.

Free. An informer.

Mrs. Good. An eaves-dropper.

Free. A liar.

Spat. Right-hand and left! this is too much; what the plague is the matter with you both!

Mrs. Good. Did not you go and tell that Amelia was a native of Scotland?

Spat. Well; and where's the harm of being born in Scotland?

Free. None; except by your malicious interpretation, rascal; by means of which you made it the ground of an information against her, and were the cause of her being apprehended.

Spat. And you were the cause of her being released; every man in his way, Mr. Freeport!

Free. Look you, firrah! you are one of those wretches, who miscall themselves authors; a fellow, whose heart, and tongue, and pen, are equally scandalous; who try to insinuate yourself every
where,

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 71

where, to make mischief if there is none, and to increase it, if you find any. But if you fetch and carry like a spaniel, you must be treated like one. I have observed that you are always loitering in the passages; but if I catch you within the wind of a door again, I'll beat you till you are as black as your own ink, sirrah. Now you know my mind.

[Exit.

Spat. Very civil and very polite, indeed, Mr. Freeport. Ha! here comes my friend lord Falbridge.

Mrs. Good. Lord Falbridge your friend? For shame, Mr. Spatter!

Enter Lord Falbridge, hastily.

L. Fal. Mrs. Goodman, I rejoice to see you, Tell me, how does my Amelia? I have heard of her distress, and flew to her relief. Was she alarmed? was she terrified?

Mrs. Good. Not much, my lord: She sustained the shock with the same constancy that she endures every other affliction.

L. Fal. I know her merit; I am too well acquainted with her greatness of soul; and hope it is not yet too late for me to do justice to her virtue. Go to her, my dear Mrs. Goodman, and tell her, I beg to see her: I have something that concerns her very nearly, to impart to her.

72 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Mrs. Good. I will, my lord. *[Exit;*

L. Fal. Oh, Mr. Spatter! I did not see you. What have you got there, Sir?

[Seeing a paper in his hand,

Spat. Proposals for a new work, my lord! May I beg the honour of your lordship's name among my list of subscribers?

L. Fal. With all my heart, Sir. I am already in your debt on another account.

[Pulling out his purse,

Spat. To me, my lord? You do me a great deal of honour; I should be very proud to be of the least service to your lordship.

L. Fal. You have been of great service to me already, Sir. It was you, I find, lodged the information against this young lady.

Spat. I did no more than my duty, my lord.

L. Fal. Yes; you did me a favour, Sir. I consider only the deed, and put the intention quite out of the question. You meant to do Amelia a prejudice, and you have done me a service: for by endeavouring to bring her into distress, you gave me an opportunity of shewing my eagerness to relieve her.—There, Sir! there is for the good you have done, while you meant to make mischief, *[giving him a few guineas.]* But take this along with it; if you ever presume to mention the name
of

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 73

of Amelia any more, or give yourself the least concern about her, or her affairs, I'll——

Spat. I am obliged to your lordship. [*Bowing.*

L. Fal. Be gone, Sir; leave me.

Spat. Your most humble servant, my lord!—
So; I am abused by every body; and yet I get money by every body;—egad, I believe I am a much cleverer fellow than I thought I was. [*Exit,*

Lord Falbridge alone.

Alas! I am afraid that Amelia will not see me. What would I not suffer to repair the affront that I have offered her?

Enter Molly,

Ha! Polly! how much am I obliged to you for sending me notice of Amelia's distress!

Molly. Hush, my lord! Speak lower, for heaven's sake! My mistress has so often forbid me to tell any thing about her, that I tremble still at the thoughts of the confidence I have put in you. I was bewitched, I think, to let you know who she was.

L. Fal. You were inspired, Polly; heaven inspired you to acquaint me with all her distresses, that I might recommend myself to her favour
again,

74 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

again, by my zeal to serve her, though against her will.

Molly. That was the reason I told you ; for else I am sure I should die with grief to give her the least uneasiness.

L. Fal. But may I hope to see Amelia ? Will she let me speak with her ?

Molly. No indeed, my lord ; she is so offended at your late behaviour, that she will not even suffer us to mention your name to her.

L. Fal. Death and confusion ! What a wretch have I made myself ! Go, Polly, go, and let her know that I must speak with her ; inform her, that I have been active for her welfare ; and have authority to release her from the information lodged against her.

Molly. I will let her know your anxiety, my lord ; but indeed I am afraid she will not see you.

L. Fal. She must, Polly, she must. The agonies of my mind are intolerable ; tell her, she must come, if it be but for a moment ; or else, in the bitterness of despair, I fear I shall break into her apartment, and throw myself at her feet.

Molly. Lud ! you frighten me out of my wits. Have a little patience, and I'll tell my mistress what a taking you are in.

L. Fal.

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 73

L. Fal. Fly, then! I can taste no comfort, till I hear her resolution. [*Exit Molly.*]

Lord Falbridge alone.

How culpably have I acted towards the most amiable of her sex! But I will make her every reparation in my power. The warmth and sincerity of my repentance shall extort forgiveness from her. By heaven, she comes!—Death! how sensibly does an ungenerous action abase us! I am conscious of the superiority of her virtue, and almost dread the encounter.

Enter Amelia.

Amelia. I understand, my lord, that by your application I am held free of the charge laid against me; and that I am once more entirely at liberty. I am truly sensible of your good offices, and thank you for the trouble you have taken. [*Going.*]

L. Fal. Stay, madam! do not leave me in still greater distraction than you found me. If my zeal to serve you has had any weight with you, it must have inspired you with more favourable dispositions towards me.

Amelia. You must pardon me, my lord, if I cannot so soon forget a very late transaction. After
that,

76 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

that, all your proceedings alarm me : Nay, even your present zeal to serve me creates new suspicions, while I cannot but be doubtful of the motives from which it proceeds.

L. Fal. Cruel Amelia ! for, guilty as I am, I must complain, since it was your own diffidence that was in part the occasion of my crime.—Why did you conceal your rank and condition from me ? Why did not you tell me, that you were the daughter of the unhappy Sir William Douglas ?

Amelia. Who told you that I was so, my lord ?

L. Fal. Nay, do not deny it now : it is in vain to attempt to conceal it any longer ; it was the main purport of my letter to apprize you of my knowledge of it.

Amelia. Your letter, my lord !

L. Fal. Yes ; wild as it was, it was the offspring of compunction and remorse ; and if it conveyed the dictates of my soul, it spoke me the truth of penitents, You did not disdain to read it, sure !

Amelia. Indeed, my lord, I never received any letter from you.

L. Fal. Not received any ! I sent it this very morning. My own servant was the messenger. What can this mean ? Has he betrayed me ?—At present,

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 77

present, suffer me to compensate, as far as possible, for the wrongs I have done you: Receive my hand and heart, and let an honourable marriage obliterate the very idea of my past conduct.

Amelia. No, my lord; you have discovered me, it is true: I am the daughter of Sir William Douglas. Judge for yourself then; and think how I ought to look upon a man, who has insulted my distress, and endeavoured to tempt me to dishonour my family.

L. Fal. Your justice must acquit me of the intention of that offence, since at that time I was ignorant of your illustrious extraction.

Amelia. It may be so; yet your excuse is but an aggravation of the crime. You imagined me, perhaps, to be of as low and mean an origin, as you thought me poor and unhappy. You supposed that I had no title to any dowry but my honour, no dependance but on my virtue; and yet you attempted to rob me of that virtue, which was the only jewel that could raise the meanness of my birth, or support me under my misfortunes; which, instead of relieving, you chose to make the pandar to your vile inclinations.

L. Fal. Thou most amiable of thy sex, how I adore thee! Even thy resentment renders thee
more

78 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

more lovely in my eyes, and makes thee, if possible, dearer to me than ever. Nothing but our union can ever make me happy.

Amelia. Such an union must not, cannot be.

L. Fal. Why? what should forbid it?

Amelia. My father.

L. Fal. Your father! where is he? In whatever part of the world he now resides, I will convey you to him, and he shall ratify our happiness.

Enter Molly, hastily.

Molly. Oh lord, madam! here's the angry lady coming again; she that made such a racket this morning.

Amelia. Lady Alton?

Molly. Yes, madam.

L. Fal. Lady Alton! Confusion! Stay, madam.

[To Amelia, who is going.]

Amelia. No, my lord; I have endured one affront from her already to-day; why should I expose myself to a second? Her ladyship, you know, has a prior claim to your attention. *[Exit.]*

L. Fal. Distraction! I had a thousand things to say to her.—Go, my dear Polly, follow my Amelia! Plead earnestly in my behalf; urge all the tenderest things that fancy can suggest, and return to me as soon as lady Alton is departed!

Molly.

Molly. I will, my lord. O lud ! here she is, as I am alive ! [Exit.

L. Fal. Abandoned by Amelia ! and hunted by this fury ! I shall run wild.

Enter lady Alton.

L. Alt. You may well turn away from me ; at length, I have full conviction of your baseness. I am now assured of my own shame, and your falsehood. Perfidious monster !

L. Fal. It is unjust to tax me with perfidy, madam. I have rather acted with too much sincerity. I long ago frankly declared to you the utter impossibility of our reconciliation.

L. Alt. What ! after having made your addresses to me ? After having sworn the most inviolable affection for me ? Oh, thou arch deceiver !

L. Fal. I never deceived you : when I professed a passion, I really entertained one ; when I made my addresses to you, I wished to call you my wife.

L. Alt. And what can you allege in excuse of your falsehood ? Have you not been guilty of the blackest perjury ?

L. Fal. The change of my sentiments needs no excuse from me, madam ; you were yourself the occasion

occasion of it.—In spite of the torrent of fashion, and the practice of too many others of my rank in life, I have a relish for domestick happiness; and have always wished for a wife, who might render my home a delightful refuge from the cares and bustle of the world abroad. These were my views with you; but, thank heaven, your outrageous temper happily betrayed itself in good time, and convinced me that my sole aim in marriage would be frustrated: for I could neither have been happy myself, nor have made you so.

L. Alt. Paltry evasion! You have abandoned me for your Amelia; you have meanly quitted a person of letters, a woman of rank and condition, for an illiterate vagabond, a needy adventurer.

L. Fal. The person you mention, madam, is, indeed, the opposite of yourself; she is all meekness, grace, and virtue.

L. Alt. Provoking traitor! You urge me past all sufferance. I meant to expostulate, but you oblige me to invective.—But, have a care! You are not so secure as you suppose yourself; and I may revenge myself sooner than you imagine.

L. Fal. I am aware of your vindictive disposition, madam; for I know that you are more envious than jealous, and rather violent than tender; but
the

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 81

the present object of my affections shall be placed above your resentment, and challenge your respect.

L. Alt. Away, fond man! I know that object of your affections better than yourself; I know who she is; I know who the stranger is that arrived for her this morning; I know all: men more powerful than yourself shall be apprised of the whole immediately; and within these two hours, nay, within this hour, you shall see the unworthy object, for which you have slighted me, with all that is dear to her and you, torn away from you perforce. [going.]

L. Fal. Ha! how's this? Stay, madam! Explain yourself! But one word; do but hear me!

L. Alt. No; I disdain to hear you: I scorn all explanation. I have discovered the contemptible cause of your inconstancy, and know you to be mean, base, false, treacherous, and perfidious. You have forfeited my tenderness, and be assured you shall feel the effects of my revenge. [Exit.]

L. Fal. What does she mean? The stranger that arrived to-day!—That arrived for my Amelia!—Sure it cannot be. [Pausing.] Is it possible that——[Re-enter Molly.] Ha, Polly! explain these riddles to me. Lady Alton threatens me; she threatens my Amelia: does she know any

82 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

thing? Her fury will transport her to every extravagance! How dreadful is jealousy in a woman!

Molly. Ay, it is a dreadful thing, indeed, my lord. Well! heaven send me always to be in love, and never to be jealous!

L. Fal. But she talked of tearing Amelia from me perforce—And then, some stranger—She threatens *him* too: what is it she means?

Molly. What! a gentleman that came to madam Amelia? *[alarmed.]*

L. Fal. Yes, to Amelia; and arrived this very day, she says.

Molly. We are ruined for ever: she means Sir William Douglas!

L. Fal. The father of my Amelia! Is he here?

Molly. Yes, my lord; I was bound to secrecy: but I can't help telling you the whole truth, because I am sure you will do all in your power to be of service to us.

L. Fal. You know my whole soul, Polly: this outrageous woman's malice shall be defeated.

Molly. Heaven send it may!

L. Fal. Be assured, it shall: do not alarm your mistress; I fly to serve her, and will return as soon as possible.

Molly. I shall be miserable till we see you again, my lord.

L. Fal.

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 83

L. Fal. And now, good heaven! that art the protection of innocence, second my endeavours! enable me to repair the affront I have offered to injured virtue, and let me relieve the unhappy from their distresses! *[Exeunt severally.]*

A C T V.

SCENE continues.

Lord Falbridge and Molly meeting.

Molly. **O**H, my lord! I am glad to see you returned.

L. Fal. Where is your mistress? *[eagerly.]*

Molly. In her own chamber.

L. Fal. And where is Sir William Douglas?

Molly. With my mistress.

L. Fal. And have there been no officers here to apprehend them?

Molly. Officers! No, my lord. Officers! You frighten me. I was in hopes, by seeing your lordship so soon again, that there were some good news for us.

L. Fal. Never was any thing so unfortunate.

84 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

The noble persons, to whom I meant to make application, were out of town; nor could by any means be seen or spoken with, till to-morrow morning: And to add to my distraction, I learnt that a new information had been made, and a new warrant issued, to apprehend Sir William Douglas and Amelia.

Molly. Oh dear! what can we do then?

L. Fal. Do! I shall run mad. Go, my dear Polly, go to your mistress and Sir William, and inform them of their danger. Every moment is precious; but perhaps they may yet have time to escape.

Molly. I will, my lord! *[going.]*

L. Fal. Stay! *[Molly returns.]* My chariot is at the door; tell them, not to wait for any other carriage, but to get into that, and drive away immediately.

Molly. I will, my lord. Oh dear! I never was so terrified in all my life. *[Exit.]*

Lord Falbridge alone.

If I can but save them now, we may gain time for mediation. Ha! what noise? Are the officers coming? Who's here?

Enter

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 85

Enter La France.

La Fr. Mi lor, Monf. le duc de——

L. Fal. Sirrah! villain! you have been the occasion of all this mischief. By your carelessness, or treachery, lady Alton has intercepted my letter to Amelia.

La Fr. Lèdy Altón?

L. Fal. Yes, dog; did not I send you here this morning with a letter?

La Fr. Oui, mi lor.

L. Fal. And did you bring it here, rascal?

La Fr. Oui, mi lor.

L. Fal. No, sirrah. You did not bring it; the lady never received any letter from me; she told me so herself. Whom did you give it to? [*La France hesitates.*] Speak, sirrah; or I'll shake your soul out of your body. [*Shaking him.*]

La Fr. I giv it to——

L. Fal. Who, rascal?

La Fr. Monsieur Spatter.

L. Fal. Mr. Spatter?

La Fr. Oui, mi lor; he promis to giv it to Mademoiselle Amelie, vid his own hand.

L. Fal. I shall soon know the truth of that, Sir, for yonder is Mr. Spatter himself: run, and tell him I desire to speak with him!

86 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

La Fr. Oui, mi lor. *Ma foi*, I vas very near kesh;
I never was in more *vilain embarras* in all my life.
[Exit.

Lord Falbridge alone.

My letter's falling into the hands of that fellow
accounts for every thing. The contents instructed
him concerning Amelia. What a wretch I am!
Destined every way to be of prejudice to that vir-
tue, which I am bound to adore.

Re-enter La France with Spatter.

Spat. Monsieur La France tells me that your
lordship desires to speak with me; what are your
commands, my lord? [Pertly.

L. Fal. The easy impudence of the rascal puts
me out of all patience, [To himself,

Spat. My lord!

L. Fal. The last time I saw you, Sir, you were
rewarded for the good you had done; you must
expect now to be chastised for your mischief.

Spat. Mischief, my lord?

L. Fal. Yes, Sir; where is that letter of mine,
which La France tells me he gave you to deliver
to a young lady of this house?

Spat. Oh, the devil! [apart.] Letter, my lord?

[Hesitates,

L. Fal,

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 87

L. Fal. Yes, letter, Sir; did not you give it him, La France?

La Fr. Oui, milor!

Spat. Y—e—e—s, yes, my lord; I had the letter of monfieur La France, to be fure, my lord; but—but—

L. Fal. But what, firrah? Give me the letter immediately; and if I find that the feal has been broken, I will break every bone in your fkin.

Spat. For Heaven's fake, my lord! [*feeling in his pockets.*] I—I—I—have not got the letter about me at prefent, my lord; but if you will give me leave to ftep to my apartment, I'll bring it you immediately. [*Offering to go.*]

L. Fal. [*Stopping him.*] No, no; that will not do, Sir; you fhall not ftir, I promife you. Look you, rafcal! tell me what is become of my letter, or I will be the death of you this infant. [*Drawing.*]

Spat. [*kneeling.*] Put up your fword, my lord; put up your fword; and I will tell you every thing in the world; indeed, I will.

L. Fal. Well, Sir; be quick then!

[*Putting up his fword.*]

Spat. Lady Alton—

L. Fal. Lady Alton! I thought fo; go on, Sir.

Spat. Lady Alton, my lord, defired me to procure

88 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

cure her all the intelligence in my power, concerning every thing that pass between your lordship and Amelia.

L. Fal. Well, Sir; what then?

Spat. A little patience, I entreat your lordship. Accordingly, to oblige her ladyship—one must oblige the ladies, you know, my lord—I did keep a pretty sharp look-out, I must confess: And this morning, meeting monsieur La France, with a letter from your lordship in his charge, I very readily gave him five guineas of her ladyship's bounty-money, to put it into my hands.

La Fr. *Oh diable! me voila perdu!* [*Aside.*

L. Fal. How! a bribe, rascal? [*To La France,*

La Fr. *Ah, mi lor!* [*On his knees.*

Spat. At the same price for every letter, he would have sold a whole mail, my lord.

La Fr. *Ayez pitié de moi!* [*Holding up his hands.*

L. Fal. Betray the confidence I reposed in you?

Spat. He offered me the letter of his own accord, my lord.

La Fr. No such thing, *en vérité, mi lor!*

Spat. Very true, I can assure your lordship.

L. Fal. Well, well; I shall chastise him at my leisure. At present, Sir, do you return me my letter.

Spat.

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 89

Spat. I—I have it not about me, my lord.

L. Fal. Where is it, rascal? tell me this instant,
or——

La Fr. Lèdy Altón——

L. Fal. [*To Spatter.*] What! has *she* got it?
speak, firrah!

Spat. She has, indeed, my lord.

L. Fal. Are not you a couple of villains?

La Fr. Oui, mi lor. } *Both speak at once.*

Spat. Yes, my lord!

L. Fal. [*To Spatter.*] But hold, Sir! a word
more with you! As you seem to be lady Alton's
chief agent, I must desire some further informa-
tion from you.

Spat. Any thing in my power, my lord.

L. Fal. I can account for her knowledge of
Amelia, by means of my letter: But how did she
discover Sir William Douglas?

Spat. I told her, my lord.

L. Fal. But how did you discover him yourself?

Spat. By listening, my lord.

L. Fal. By listening?

Spat. Yes, by listening, my lord! Let me but
once be about a house, and I'll engage to clear it,
like a ventilator, my lord. There is not a door
to a single apartment in this house, but I have
planted my ear at the keyhole.

L. Fal.

90 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

L. Fal. And were these the means by which you procured your intelligence?

Spat. Yes, my lord.

L. Fal. Impossible.

Spat. Oh dear! nothing so easy; this is nothing at all, my lord! I have given an account of the plays in our journal, for three months together, without being nearer the stage than the pit-passage; and I have collected the debates of a whole session, for the magazine, only by attending in the lobby.

L. Fal. Precious rascal! Ha! who comes here? lady Alton herself again, as I live!

Spat. [*Apart.*] The devil she is! I wish I was out of the house.

Enter Lady Alton.

L. Alt. What! still here, my lord? still witnessing to your own shame, and the justice of my resentment?

L. Fal. Yes, I am still here, madam; and sorry to be made a witness of your cruelty and meanness; of your descending to arts, so much beneath your rank; and practices, so unworthy of your sex.

L. Alt. You talk in riddles, my lord!

L. Fal. This gentleman shall explain them. Here, madam! here is the engine of your malice,
the

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 91

the instrument of your vengeance, your prime minister, Mr. Spatter.

L. Alt. What have I to do with Mr. Spatter?

L. Fal. To do mischief; to intercept letters, and break them open; to overhear private conversations, and betray them; to——

L. Alt. Have you laid any thing of this kind to my charge, Sir? *[To Spatter.]*

Spat. I have been obliged to speak the truth, though much against my will, indeed, madam.

L. Alt. The truth! thou father of lies, did ever any truth proceed from thee? What! is his lordship your new patron! A fit Mæcenas for thee, thou scandal to the *belles lettres*!

L. Fal. Your rage at this detection is but a fresh conviction of your guilt.

L. Alt. Do not triumph, monster! you shall still feel the superiority I have over you. The object of your wishes is no longer under your protection; the officers of the government entered the house at the same time with myself, with a warrant to seize both Amelia and her father.

L. Fal. Confusion! Are not they gone then? La France! villain, run, and bring me word!

La Fr. I go, mi lor!

[Exit.]

L. Alt. Do not flatter yourself with any hopes; they

92 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

they have not escaped; here they are, secured in proper hands.

L. Fal. Death and distraction! now I am completely miserable.

Enter Sir William Douglas, Amelia, Owen, and Officers.

L. Alt. Yes, your misery is complete indeed; and so shall be my revenge. Oh! your servant, madam! [*turning to Amelia*] You now see to what a condition your pride and obstinacy have reduced you. Did not I bid you tremble at the consequences?

Amelia. It was here alone that I was vulnerable. [*holding her father's hand.*] Oh, madam, [*turning to lady Alton*] by the virtues that should adorn your rank, by the tenderness of your sex, I conjure you, pity my distress! do but release my father; and there are no concessions, however humiliating, which you may not exact from me.

L. Alt. Those concessions now come too late, madam. If I were even inclined to relieve you, at present, it is not in my power. [*haughtily.*] Lord Falbridge perhaps may have more interest.

[*With a sneer.*

L. Fal. Cruel, insulting woman! [*to lady Alton.*]

Do

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 93

Do not alarm yourself, my Amelia! Do not be concerned, Sir! [*to Sir William.*] Your enemies shall still be disappointed. Altho' ignorant of your arrival, I have for some time past exerted all my interest in your favour, and by the mediation of those still more powerful, I do not despair of success. Your case is truly a compassionate one; and in that breast, from which alone mercy can proceed, thank heaven, there is the greatest reason to expect it.

Sir Will. I am obliged to you for your concern, Sir.

L. Fal. Oh, I owe you all this, and much more.—But this is no time to speak of my offences, or repentance.

L. Alt. This is mere trifling. I thought you knew on what occasion you came hither, Sir.

[*To the Officer.*]

Officer. Your reproof is too just, madam. I attend you, Sir.

[*To Sir William.*]

L. Fal. Hold! Let me prevail on you, Sir, [*to the officer*] to suffer them to remain here till tomorrow morning. I will answer for the consequences.

Officer. Pardon me, my lord! we should be happy to oblige you; but we must discharge the duty of our office.

L. Fal.

94 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

L. Fal. Distraction !

Sir Will. Come then ! we follow you, Sir ! Be comforted, my Amelia ! for my sake, be comforted ! Wretched as I am, your anxiety shocks me more than my own misfortunes.

[*As they are going out, enter Freeport.*]

Free. Heyday ! what now ! the officers here again ! I thought we had satisfied you this morning. What is the meaning of all this ?

Officer. This will inform you, Sir.

[*giving the warrant.*]

Free. How's this ? Let me see ! [*reading.*] *This is to require you—um, um—the bodies of William Ford and Amelia Walton—um, um—suspected persons—um, um—Well, well ! I see what this is : but you will accept of bail, Sir !*

Officer. No, Sir ; this case is notailable, and we have already been reprimanded for taking your recognisance this morning.

Sir Will. Thou good man ! I shall ever retain the most lively sense of your behaviour ; but your kind endeavours to preserve the poor remainder of my proscribed life are in vain. We must submit to our destiny.

[*All going.*]

Free. Hold, hold ! one word, I beseech you, Sir ! [*to the officer*] a minute or two will make no difference. Bail then, it seems, will not do, Sir ?

Officer.

THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. 95

Officer. No, Sir.

Free. Well, well; then I have something here that will, perhaps. [*Feeling in his pocket.*]

L. Fal. How!

L. Alt. What does he mean?

Free. No, it is not there—It is in t'other pocket, I believe. Here, Sir William! [*producing a parchment.*] Ask the gentlemen, if *that* will not do.—But first of all, read it yourself, and let us hear how you like the contents.

Sir Will. What do I see! [*opening and perusing it.*] My pardon! the full and free pardon of my offences! Oh, heaven! and is it to you then, to you, Sir, that I owe all this?—Thus, thus let me shew my gratitude to my benefactor!

[*Falling at his feet.*]

Free. Get up, get up, Sir William! Thank heaven, and the most gracious of monarchs. You have very little obligation to me, I promise you.

Amelia. My father restored! Then I am the happiest of women.

L. Fal. A pardon! I am transported.

L. Alt. How's this? a pardon!

Free. Under the great seal, madam.

L. Alt. Confusion! what! am I baffled at last, then? Am I disappointed even of my revenge?—

Thou

96 THE ENGLISH MERCHANT.

Thou officious fool! [*to Freeport.*] May these wretches prove as great a torment to you, as they have been to me! As for thee, [*to lord Falbridge.*] thou perfidious monster, may thy guilt prove thy punishment! May you obtain the unworthy union you desire! May your wife prove as false to you, as you have been to me! May you be followed, like Orestes, with the furies of a guilty conscience; find your error when it is too late; and die in all the horrors of despair! [*Exit.*]

Free. There goes a woman of quality for you! What little actions, and what a great soul!—Ha! Master Spatter! where are you going?

[*To Spatter, who is sneaking off.*]

Spat. Following the muse, Sir! [*pointing after lady Alton.*] But if you have any further commands, or his lordship should have occasion for me to write his epithalamium——

L. Fal. Peace, wretch! sleep in a whole skin, and be thankful! I would solicit mercy myself, and have not leisure to punish you. Begone, Sir!

Spat. I am obliged to your lordship.—This affair will make a good article for the Evening-Post to-night, however. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Sir Will. How happy has this reverse of fortune made me!—But my surprize is almost equal to my joy.

joy. May we beg you, Sir, [*to Freeport.*] to inform us how your benevolence has effected what seems almost a miracle in my favour?

Free. In two words then, Sir William, this happy event is chiefly owing to your old friend, the late lord Brumpton.

Sir Will. Lord Brumpton!

Free. Yes; honest Owen there told me, that his lordship had been employed in soliciting your pardon. Did not you, Owen?

Owen. I did, Sir.

Free. Upon hearing that, and perceiving the danger you were in, I went immediately to the present lord Brumpton, who is a very honest fellow, and one of the oldest acquaintance I have in the world. He, at my instance, immediately made the necessary application; and guess how agreeably we were surpris'd, to hear that the late lord had already been successful, and that the pardon had been made out, on the very morning of the day his lordship died. Away went I, as fast as a pair of horses could carry me, to fetch it; and should certainly have prevented this last arrest, if the warrant to apprehend you, as dangerous persons, had not issued under your assumed names of William Ford and Amelia Walton, against whom the information

had been laid. But, however, it has only served to prevent your running away, when the danger was over, for at present, Sir William, thank heaven and his majesty, you are a whole man again; and you have nothing to do but to make a legal appearance, and to plead the pardon I have brought you, to absolve you from all informations.

L. Fal. Thou honest excellent man! How happily have you supplied, what I failed to accomplish!

Free. Ay, I heard that your lordship had been busy.—You had more friends at court than one, Sir William, I promise you.

Sir Will. I am overwhelmed with my sudden good fortune, and am poor even in thanks. Teach me, Mr. Freeport, teach me how to make some acknowledgment for your extraordinary generosity!

Free. I'll tell you what, Sir William. Notwithstanding your daughter's pride, I took a liking to her, the moment I saw her.

L. Fal. Ha! what's this?

Free. What's the matter, my lord?

L. Fal. Nothing. Go on, Sir!

Free. Why then, to confess the truth, I am afraid that my benevolence, which you have all been pleased to praise so highly, had some little leaven of self-interest in it; and I was desirous

to promote Amelia's happiness more ways than one.

L. Fal. Then I am the veriest wretch that ever existed.—But take her, Sir! for I must confess that you have deserved her by your proceedings; and that I, fool and villain that I was, have forfeited her by mine. *[Going.*

Free. Hold, hold! one word before you go, if you please, my lord! You may kill yourself for aught I know, but you sha'n't lay your death at my door, I promise you. I had a kindness for Amelia, I must confess; but in the course of my late negotiation for Sir William, hearing of your lordship's pretensions, I dropt all thoughts of her. It is a maxim with me, to do good wherever I can, but always to abstain from doing mischief.—Now as I can't make the lady happy myself, I would fain put her into the hands of those that can.—So, if you would oblige me, Sir William, let me join these two young folks together, *[joining their hands]* and do you say Amen to it.

Sir Will. With all my heart!—You can have no objection, Amelia. *[Amelia bursts into tears.*

L. Fal. How bitterly do those tears reproach me! It shall be the whole business of my future life to atone for them.

Amelia. Your actions this day, and your solicitude for my father, have redeemed you in my good opinion! and the consent of Sir William, seconded by so powerful an advocate as Mr. Freeport, cannot be contended with. Take my hand, my lord! a virtuous passion may inhabit the purest breast; and I am not ashamed to confess, that I had conceived a partiality for you, till your own conduct turned my heart against you; and if my resentment has given you any pain, when I consider the occasion, I must own that I cannot repent it.

L. Fal. Mention it no more, my love, I beseech you! You may justly blame your lover, I confess; but I will never give you cause to complain of your husband.

Free. I don't believe you will. I give you joy, my lord; I give you all joy! As for you, madam, [*to Amelia.*] do but shew the world that you can bear prosperity, as well as you have sustained the shocks of adversity, and there are few women, who may not wish to be an Amelia.

EPILOGUE.

Written by DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

Enter lady Alton in a passion; Spatter following.

Lady Alton.

I'LL hear no more, thou wretch!—Attend to reason!

A woman of my rank!—'Tis petty treason!
Hear reason, blockhead! Reason! What is that?
Bid me wear pattens, and a high-crown'd hat!
Won't you be gone?—what want you?—what's
your view?

Spatter.

Humbly to serve the Tuneful Nine in you.—
I must invoke you—

Lady Alton.

I renounce such things;
Not Phoebus now, but vengeance sweeps the strings;
My mind is discord all!—I scorn, detest
All human kind!—you more than all the rest.

Spatter.

I humbly thank you, ma'am.—But weigh the matter.

Lady Alton.

I won't hear reason! and I hate you, Spatter!
Myself, and ev'ry thing—

H 3

Spatter.

EPILOGUE

Spatter.

That I deny;
You love a little mischief; so do I;
And mischief I have for you.—

Lady Alton.

How, where, when?
Will you stab Falbridge?

Spatter.

Yes, ma'am—with my pen.

Lady Alton.

Let loose, my Spatter, till to death you've stung'em,
That green-ey'd monster Jealousy, among 'em.

Spatter.

To dash at all, the spirit of my trade is,
Men, women, children, parsons, lords and ladies.—
There will be danger.

Lady Alton.

And there shall be pay.

Take my purse, Spatter! [Gives it him.

Spatter. [Smiles and takes it,

In an honest way.

Lady Alton.

Should my lord beat you—

Spatter.

Let them laugh that win!
For all my bruises, here's gold-beater's skin.

[Chinking the purse,

Lady

EPILOGUE.

Lady Alton.

Nay, should he kill you——

Spatter.

Ma'am!

Lady Alton.

My kindness meant,

To pay your merit with a monument.

Spatter.

Your kindness, lady, takes away my breath;
We'll stop, with your good leave, on this side death.

Lady Alton.

Attack Amelia, both in verse and prose:

Your wit can make a nettle of a rose.

Spatter.

A stinging-nettle for his lordship's breast;

And to my *stars* and *dashes* leave the rest.

I'll make 'em miserable, never fear;

Pout in a month, and part in half a year.

I know my genius, and can trust my plan;

I'll break a woman's heart with any man.

Lady Alton.

Thanks, thanks, dear Spatter! be severe, and bold!

Spatter.

No qualms of conscience with a purse of gold;

Tho' pill'ries threaten, and tho' crabsticks fall,

Yours are my heart, soul, pen, ears, bones, and all.

[*Exit Spatter.*

E P I L O G U E.

Lady Alton alone.

Thus to the winds at once my cares I scatter—
 Oh, 'tis a charming rascal, this same Spatter !
 His precious mischief makes the storm subside !
 My anger, thank my stars ! all rose from pride.
 Pride should belong to us alone of fashion ;
 And let the mob take love, that vulgar passion !
 Love, pity, tenderness, are only made
 For poets, Abigails, and folks in trade ;
 Some cits about their *feelings* make a fuss,
 And some are better bred—who live with us ;
 How low lord Falbridge is !—He takes a wife,
 To love, and cherish, and be fix'd for life !
 Thinks marriage is a *comfortable* state,
 No pleasure like a *virtuous tête-à-tête* !
 Do our lords justice, for I would not wrong 'em,
 There are not many such poor souls among 'em.
 Our turtles from the town will fly with speed,
 And I'll foretell the vulgar life they'll lead.
 With love and ease grown fat, they face all weather,
 And, farmers both, trudge arm in arm together :
 Now view their stock, now in their nurs'ry prattle,
 For ever with their children, or their cattle.
 Like the dull mill-horse in one round they keep ;
 They walk, talk, fondle, dine, and fall asleep ;
Their custom always in the afternoon—
 He bright as *Sol*, and she the chaste full-moon !

Wak'd

E P I L O G U E.

Wak'd with their coffee, madam first begins,
She rubs her eyes, his lordship rubs his shins;
She sips, and smirks;—"Next week's our wedding-

"day,

"Married seven years!—And ev'ry hour (*yawns*)

"more gay!"

"True, Emmy, (cries my lord)—the blessing lies,

"Our hearts in ev'ry thing (*yawns*) so sympathize!

The day thus spent, my lord for musick calls;

He thrums the bass, to which my lady squalls;

The children join, which so delights these ninnies,

The brats seem all *Guarduccis*—*Lovatinis*.

—What means this qualm?—Why, sure, while

I'm despising,

That vulgar passion Envy, is not rising!

Oh, no!—Contempt is struggling to burst out;

I'll give it vent at lady Scalp'em's *route*.

THE
MAN OF BUSINESS.

A
COMEDY.

*First acted at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden,
on the 29th of January, 1774.*

~~—~~ *Mibi res, non me rebus submittere conor.* HON.

THE
MAN OF BUSINESS.

C O M M E N T S

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE

MAN OF BUSINESS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

LONDON: J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1825.

Price 1s. 6d.

By the Author of the

MAN OF BUSINESS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

LONDON: J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1825.

Price 1s. 6d.

By the Author of the

MAN OF BUSINESS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

LONDON: J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1825.

Price 1s. 6d.

TO THE HONOURABLE
CONSTANTINE JOHN PHIPPS.

SIR,

WERE the motives of dedication candidly acknowledged, perhaps it would appear that authors in general rather intend a compliment to their own vanity, than to that of their patrons. Patron, I flatter myself, will, in the present instance, appear to you too cold and distant an expression; and though I entertain all due respect for superior rank and situation, and am happy in seizing an opportunity of declaring to the world that I am honoured with the friendship of Mr. Phipps, yet never was there an epistle of this nature, in which mere vanity had a more inconsiderable share; nor should I be thus proud of proclaiming my affection for him, were I not convinced of his being possessed of qualities and accomplishments that would distinguish and adorn the most humble, as well as the most elevated situation.

In

DEDICATION.

In the midst of the most familiar intercourse, I should be loth to forfeit in any degree the partiality you are pleased to shew me, by the smallest appearance of flattery. But when I do but echo the voice of all those who are acquainted with your publick or private character; when I barely observe, that in an age of the most unbounded dissipation, you have devoted your time to the attainment of all useful and elegant knowledge; joining to the most amiable disposition the most unshaken integrity, as well as a thorough acquaintance with the constitution of your country, together with the most able and faithful discharge of the duties of your profession—when I just faintly sketch these outlines of your character, it will, I hope, rather be supposed that I presume to hint to you what the world seems to expect from a young man of fashion of so great promise, than that I mean to corrupt you, or degrade myself, by idle compliment and mean adulation.

Of the Comedy which I now present to you, I will venture to say but little. It is difficult for any man to speak with a tolerable grace of himself, and literary performances ought to be their own recommendation; yet I will not scruple to confess, that if I thought it entirely despicable, I would not solicit

DEDICATION.

solicit your acceptance of it. Three of the great writers, enumerated in the Prologue, Plautus, Terence, and Marmontel, have contributed to enrich it. A play lately exhibited on the French stage, the *Deux Amis* of M. Beaumarchais, also suggested some hints of the fable; but the traces of them in this Comedy are so little apparent, that if I did not thus acknowledge the sources from which I have drawn, I question if the ingenious author himself would be able to claim his own property.

Did I conceive that this play contained any passages unfavourable to liberty, more especially the liberty of the press, you, Sir, would be one of the last persons in the kingdom to whose protection I should venture to recommend it. The liberty of the press is a most invaluable privilege; yet that liberty, like every other species of liberty, may be abused; and while it remains (as it is to be hoped it ever will remain) unrestrained by law, the abuse of it is more peculiarly the object of comedy; whose province it is, by wholesome and general satire, to correct those failings and enormities, of which the law takes no cognisance. Better were it that thousands and ten thousands of such insignificant

DEDICATION.

significant individuals as myself should be maliciously slandered, than that sacred right of Englishmen should be violated or infringed: Yet who will justify the scandalous personalities (politicks entirely out of the question) that disgrace our newspapers? It is not however sufficient, it seems, to endure them patiently, without a wish to interrupt their progress, but the gentlest retort is enough to set all Grub-street in an uproar; and the most good-humoured ridicule of these illustrious authors is an attack upon the liberty of the press!—A liberty which they are zealous to exercise in its fullest extent, without allowing any portion of it to their opponents; not considering that the chief benefit of the liberty of the press results from its being open to all, and affording a free examination of both sides of every question. The very liberty they take, however, they are not willing to give; like a scavenger I saw the other day in the street, who bespattered every passenger with the contents of his mud-cart, but sent a volley of curses after a lady of quality, who happened to splash him as she drove by in her chariot.

Having said thus much of my Comedy, in vindication of the freedom I have used in inscribing it

DEDICATION.

it to you, I will not trespass longer on your patience, than to repeat the satisfaction I feel in thus openly testifying my regard; and that I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most devoted, faithful,

And affectionate humble Servant,

GEORGE COLMAN.

P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by Mr. WOODWARD.

Enter as an Author, with a manuscript.

SEE here, good folks, how genius is abus'd !
A play of mine, the manager refus'd !
And why ?—I knew the reason well enough—
Only to introduce his own damn'd stuff.
Oh ! he's an arrogant, invidious elf,
Who hates all wit, and has no wit himself !
As to the plays on which he builds his fame,
Boasting your praise, *we all know whence they came.*
Crown him with ivy, least of Brentford kings !
For still, like ivy, round some oak he clings.
Plays you have damn'd, their authors yet unknown,
Trust me, good people, those were all his own.
If his lame genius ever stood the test,
'Twas but a crutch'd noun adjective at best ;
Or rather *expletive*, whose weak pretence
Occupies space, but adds not to the sense.
His lady-muse, tho' puling, wan, and thin,
With green-room caudle all in state lies-in ;
His brats so rieketty, 'tis still their curse
To be swath'd, swaddled, and put out to nurse ;
Brought

P R O L O G U E.

Brought up on playhouse pap, they waile and cry,
Crawl on the stage, or in convulsions die.

His play to-night, like all he ever wrote,
Is pie-ball'd, piec'd, and patch'd, like Joseph's coat;
Made up of shreds from Plautus and Corneille,
Terence, Moliere, Voltaire, and Marmontel;
With rags from fifty others I might mention,
Which proves him dull and barren of invention:
But shall his nonsense hold the place of sense?
No, damn him! damn him, in your own defence!
Else on your mercy will the dwarf presume,
Nor e'er give giant Genius elbow-room.

Now, now, my friends, we've brought him to the
stake;

Bait him! and then, perhaps, some sport he'll make.
I've lin'd the house in front, above, below;
Friends, like dried figs, stuck close in every row!
Some wits in ambush, in the gallery sit;
Some form a critick phalanx in the pit;
Some scatter'd forces their shrill catcalls play,
And strike the Tiny Scribbler with dismay.
On then, my hearts! charge! fire! your triumph's
certain

O'er his weak battery from behind the curtain!
To-morrow's Chronicle your deeds shall boast,
And loud *Te Deums* fill the Morning-Post.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

FABLE,	<i>Mr. Bensley.</i>
GOLDING,	<i>Mr. Shuter.</i>
BEVERLEY,	<i>Mr. Lewis.</i>
DENIER,	<i>Mr. Lewes.</i>
TROPICK,	<i>Mr. Woodward.</i>
CHECK,	<i>Mr. Quick.</i>
HANDY,	<i>Mr. Dyer.</i>
Lord RIOT,	<i>Mr. Davis.</i>
Sir HELTER SKELTER,	<i>Mr. Fox.</i>
Colonel RAKISH,	<i>Mr. Owenfon.</i>
SCANTY,	<i>Mr. Gardner.</i>
CAPIAS,	<i>Mr. Kniveton.</i>
SNAP,	<i>Mr. Thompson.</i>
HAZARD,	<i>Mr. Cushing.</i>
CASH,	<i>Mr. Hamilton.</i>
Servant,	<i>Mr. Bates.</i>
Mrs. GOLDING,	<i>Mrs. Green.</i>
LYDIA,	<i>Mrs. Bulkley.</i>
Mrs. CARLTON,	<i>Mrs. Pitt.</i>
Mrs. FLOUNCE,	<i>Mrs. Helme.</i>

THE

THE
MAN OF BUSINESS.

ACT I.

An apartment in Golding's house.

Enter Fable and Mrs. Golding.

(She in a fancy dress, with a mask in her hand.)

Fable.

MADAM, madam, I tell you he is a coxcomb—an arrant coxcomb, Mrs. Golding.

Mrs. Gold. He is a gentleman—thoroughly the gentleman, Mr. Fable.

Fable. Yes, a modern gentleman—a fine gentleman—a race of puppies more pernicious to this country than a breed of wolves would have been.—A mongrel puppy too; on a wrong scent after pleasure; in chase of the fashion, but for ever at fault; with vanity in view, and ridicule for a whipper-in.

Mrs. Gold. Well, well, Mr. Fable, it does not

signify talking. You know, you and I could never agree on this matter. I was always for my kinsman's keeping the very best company; and, for my part, I see no great difference between him and his friends of quality—Nay, indeed, mongrel, as you are pleased to call him, Sir, the advantage is rather on his side: He has money without rank, and many of them have rank without money. If Beverley has great goings-out, he has great coming-in too; while they keep fine houses, flaming equipages, and great tables, out of nothing at all,

Fable. For which very reason, Mrs. Golding, he is not upon even terms with them. What has a man of business to do with men of pleasure? Why is a young banker to live with young noblemen?

Mrs. Gold. And why not, Mr. Fable? Is not the business of the house carried on at the polite end of the town? Does not he live in the very centre of persons of fashion? And has not he constant dealings with them?—Not shut up in Lombard-street—within the sound of Bow-bell, or in sight of the Monument—not cramming turtle and venison at the King's Arms, or the London-Tavern—but balloted into the Macaroni, and a member of the Sçavoir Vivre.

Fable. So much the worse—so much the worse,
Mrs.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 119

Mrs. Golding! His father, who was the firm of the house, established the credit of it by decency and sobriety: But dying while Beverley was very young, your husband, Mr. Golding, was received into the partnership as a man of experience, capable of carrying on the business to more advantage. He, you know, is now absent on necessary business abroad. In the mean time, I am left a kind of guardian to Beverley, and have the superintendence of his affairs—And what account shall I be likely to give of them, when instead of making money after the example of his father, he is intent on nothing but spending it? Horses at Newmarket, hounds at Bagshot, a villa, a mistress, play, and a round of dissipation among hair-brain'd spendthrifts, wasting their constitutions before they arrive at maturity, spending their fortunes before they come to them, granting annuities to eat up their estates, or living upon the sale of post-obits and reversions!—There, madam, there's a picture of a genteel young banker at the west-end of the town for you; drawn from the life, and coloured after nature! how do you like it, madam?

Mrs. Gold. A frightful caricature, Mr. Fable! your descriptions are just the reverse of that sweet

flower of a man, the auctioneer, over the way. His stile is enchanting and delicate, elegant as the *or moulu*, or Derbyshire petrifications, he sets to sale, and soft as the pencil of Guido, Raphael, or Correggio! Your pictures may be taken from nature; but they are dark!—dark as the landscapes of Poussin, and wild, and horrible as the views of Salvator Rosa.

Fable. Madam, madam! it is these affected airs, madam, that pervert your understanding, and make you blind to the danger of your kinsman.—He is in imminent danger of ruin, madam; which will fall upon him, if something is not speedily done to prevent it.

Mrs. Gold. And what would you have me do, Mr. Fable? All I say is, that good company is a very good thing, and genteel connections can never do my kinsman any mischief; and if I had been mistress, I never would have rested till I had got him into parliament.

Fable. Into parliament!—into jail, madam. Is not he at expence enough—

Mrs. Gold. Expence! Lord, lord! this is a point of œconomy, Sir. Why he would save above double the charge of bringing him into the house by the mere postage of letters.—Sir Geoffry Kilderkin

derkin got himself elected for no other purpose.—My kinsman too would frank himself whole again.—And then I am sure he would make an admirable figure in a debate.—Oh, how it would have delighted me to have sat among the ladies in the gallery of the house—to have seen him upon his feet, his whole person hanging over his right leg, his right arm swinging to and fro like a pendulum, and his tongue running down like a larum!

Fable. So, so! you, I fear, are too far gone for wholesome counsel. Beverley, I hope, is not quite incorrigible, and some good may be done upon him. Good morrow to you, madam! I have business. Good day, madam.

Mrs. Gold. Good night, if you please, Sir. You may be just up, but I have not been to bed yet, being (as you see) but just come from the Pantheon. The masquerade began to grow thin; but my kinsman, who was there, is not come home yet, and may not return for some time perhaps—so, once more, good night, good Mr. Fable! I'll endeavour to recruit my spirits from the fatigue of the pleasures of the night, and leave you to the business of the day. Your servant, Sir. [Exit.

Fable

Fable alone.

Your servant, madam!—A weak woman! incapable indeed of swaying the mind of Beverley by her advice, but still serving to countenance his follies by her example. But now to the business of the day, as she says!—A serious day it will appear to the young gentleman, I fancy. But it is high time to make him serious. I'll just allow him a short interval to sleep off his masquerade, and then wake him from his dream of folly to a sense of his true situation.

Enter Check.

Fable. Good morrow, Check!

Check. Good morrow to your honour! The shop is just opened and sprinkled. I am going to the counting-house.

Fable. That's right, Check. Regularity and punctuality are the life of business.

Check. The life and soul, Sir. I have always found them so. Always exact myself, I can answer—always precise to a second! and as true to my time as the men that strike the quarters at St. Dunstan's. Ha, ha!

Fable. You're merry, Check!

Check. Ah! I wish I had cause, Sir. Another
great

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 123

great house in the city stopt payment yesterday, and a large sum subscribed to prop the credit of another. Sad times, Mr. Fable !

Fable. Sad times ! sad men, honest Check. Men make the times.

Check. Very true, very true, Sir. Ah, one need not go far from home to know that, Sir. In poor old Mr. Beverley's time, when we carried on business in Threadneedle-street, those were days, Mr. Fable ! I wish we were on the other side of Temple-bar, again !

Fable. No, no ; you are right just where you are, friend. The two sides of Temple-bar have changed hands, Check. The gay, smart, airy sparks of the west-end of the town, have all taken to business, and are turned sheriffs and aldermen ; and the merchants, bankers, and tradesmen, are your principal persons of pleasure now-a-days.

Check. Ah, I am afraid so. Here's a house, forsooth ! my old lady always entertaining company at home, and my young master always abroad ; night turned into day, and day turned into night ! It was not so in my old master's time. Never out of the regular channel ; sure and moderate profit ; quiet, sober living ; a plain joint and a pudding on week-days, and, perhaps, two joints and two puddings on Sunday !

Fable.

Fable. Nay, nay, don't be melancholy, Cheek. You may live to see two puddings on table again, perhaps.

Check. We have no hopes but in you, Mr. Fable; no hope but in you, Sir! Every thing would go to wreck and ruin, if it was not for you, Sir.

Fable. Come, come; cheer up, honest Check! your young master will take up shortly. He has a good heart, and a good understanding.

Check. I wish he would make less use of his heart, and more of his understanding, Sir. He is as generous as a prince, and he thinks all his acquaintance as honest and generous as himself. Let him mind his friend, Mr. Denier, Sir. There's a young man for you! merry and wife, I warrant him! He knows that a shilling is a serious thing; that a penny saved is a penny got; and two and two make four, Sir.

Fable. Beverley will find it out at last, Check.—Have you prepared the books and papers as I directed you?

Check. I have, Sir.

Fable. Very well. Let them be ready for inspection this very morning; and tell Mr. Beverley I am gone to the Bank; but desire he would not be out of the way at my return, as I have something

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 123

thing of consequence to say to him. Good morrow, Check!

Check. Good morrow to your honour! I shall be sure to let Mr. Beverley know, Sir.

[*Exit Fable.*

Oh, here comes his *gentleman*, as they call him. With there was not such a gentleman within the bills of mortality.

Enter Handy.

Good morrow to you, Mr. Handy! Good morrow!

Handy. What! my old Rule of Three! are you there? Good morrow to you!

Check. Mr. Beverley is not up yet, I suppose.

Handy. Then you suppose wrong, old Thread-needle! He is up, I assure you.

Check. Indeed! why he is more early than ordinary, Mr. Handy.

Handy. Much later than ordinary, master Check. He has not been to bed yet.

Check. Mercy on me! past eight in the morning, and not gone to bed yet!

Handy. No, he's not come home from the masquerade.

Check. The masquerade! Oh, now you have accounted for it.

Handy.

Handy. Yes, I had some thoughts of being at the Pantheon myself; but——

Check. What! at the fixpenny Pantheon at Islington, Mr. Handy?

Handy. Sixpenny Pantheon! 'Sdeath, what d'ye mean, Sir? do ye take me for a little shop-keeping mechanick, or one of your dapper city clerks, that draws his pen from under his ear in the evening, to go and drink tea at Bagnigge-Wells or Dobney's Bowling-Green? No, Sir; let me tell you, I frequent no diversions but those of persons of quality. Plays now and then, operas twice a week, and masquerades whenever there are any.—A lady of my particular acquaintance—of the first fashion I assure you, old gentleman,—had provided me a ticket, and a domino, with a smart hat and feather, and diamond button and loop to it.—But, as the devil would have it, my lord du—zounds, what was I saying?—Her husband, I say, happening to come in at an unfortunate moment, saw the dress lying in her apartment. My lady—a devilish clever woman, upon my soul! turned it off with a laugh, and told him she had provided them on purpose for him, in order to surprise him with a piece of conjugal gallantry. So away they went to the Pantheon together, and I was obliged to amuse myself with another woman of quality, who kept
house

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 127

house all the evening, to console myself for my disappointment.

Check. You imagine I have a large portion of faith, I believe, Mr. Handy.

Handy. Faith!—Why, have I offered to borrow any money of you, you old multiplication-table? Eh?

Check. You have not taken that liberty with me, because you knew I would lend you none: but you are rather too familiar with your betters, methinks.

Handy. They are familiar with us, and encourage familiarities on our side.—Nay, if you would follow my advice, I would engage to make a fortune even for you, old Methusalem!

Check. For me, Mr. Handy?

Handy. Ay, for you, old boy! What do you think now of making love to Mrs. Golding? Her husband's abroad, you know. Intrigues are the mode, and she loves to be in the fashion.—Devil take me, if I don't think she and you would make an excellent tête-à-tête.—Shalum and Hilpa! Eh, my old antediluvian?

Check. A truce with your wit, good Mr. Handy! and please to let your master know, that Mr. Fable desires to see him on some particular business, as soon

128 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

soon as he is stirring,—which, perhaps, may be about dinner-time.

Handy. What! Do you pretend to joke too? Pounds, shillings, and pence,—you had best stick to that, old gentleman.

Check. They won't stick to you long, I am afraid, young gentleman. Ha, ha!

Handy. Again! You are trying to copy after old master Fable, I warrant you.—A sly, dry, queer old buck, that Mr. Fable! He don't much approve of our proceedings, I believe. The people call my master the Macaroni Banker, he says. [*Laugh heard*]—Gadso! yonder my master comes, faith——and along with him his bosom friend, Mr. Denier—a snake in his bosom too, if I am not mistaken. I never could endure that shrewd spark since I heard him upon the chapter of vails—which he never gives to other peoples' servants; but, for fear of raising the wages at home, suffers them to be taken by his own. A young curmudgeon! worse than a liquorish old dotard, if possible. What say you, Grandfire?—[*laugh again*]—But, hush, they are here.—Now you may deliver your errand to him yourself, old gentleman.

[*Check and Handy retire a little.*]

Enter

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 129

*Enter Beverley and Denier. (Beverley in a domino ;
Denier also in a masquerade dress.)*

Bev. Support a character at a masquerade ! Absurd and ridiculous ! And a vulgar idea too, that never entered the head of a gentleman.

Denier. Oh, my habit gave me no trouble of that sort ; yet I did not wear it from choice, but from convenience. One of the managers of Covent-Garden theatre—for there are about five and forty of them, you know—lent me the dress ; and I don't see why I should be expected to support a character in it any more than those who usually wear it.—Eh, Beverley ?

Bev. No, to be sure. They who say the softest things, and succeed most with the women, enter into the spirit and genius of the place the most happily. Gallantry and intrigue, not wit and humour, are the objects of a masquerade.

Denier. I beg your pardon, Beverley. I know more than one or two professed jokers, that rehearse their parts for a fortnight before-hand, and write down all the good things they shall say ; but, as ill luck will have it, for want of courage and opportunity, never utter one of them ; and yet, resolving they shall not be lost to the world, send them, ready cut and dry, to the news-papers, as

having been their extempore fallies and masquerade pleasantries.

Bev. Oh, I know the little haberdashers of small wits; I know them, Denier, and, thank you for your description of them.—But who the deuce was that very elegant-looking woman that lord Robert Sprightly stuck so close to for most part of the evening? I have a strong notion it was lady Sarah Brilliant—very like her figure! or Harriot Free love—but her—she's common, you know—her he would not have followed so warmly.—Oh, Check, are you there?—Handy too? [*Check and Handy come forward.*] Have you set my night-things in my bed-chamber?

Handy. They are all ready, Sir.

Bev. Did you present Sir John Squanderfield's notes for acceptance, Check?

Check. I did, Sir.

Bev. Any cards, Handy?—And were they good bills, Check?

Handy. The cards, tickets, and messages lie on your dressing-table, Sir.

Bev. Very well.—And were Sir John's notes duly accepted, Check?

Check. They ought to have been duly *protested*, Sir.—Not good bills—not worth a farthing, Sir.—I have not given him credit for them.

Bev.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 131

Bev. Well, let him have due notice, d'ye hear, Check?—And do you call at the *Sçavoir*, and let them know that I shall dine there to-day, d'ye hear, Handy?—And do you come to me with the state of Sir John's account, as soon as I am up, d'ye hear, Check?

Check. The account is ready, Sir; but Mr. Fable desires to speak with you as soon as you are up, Sir. He is gone into the city, but will return before you are stirring, and has particular business.

Bev. I shall be ready to attend him. Let me be called about one, d'ye hear, Handy?—I have nothing further to say to you at present, Check.

Check. Mighty well, Sir.

Bev. Handy, wait in my chamber.

Handy. I shall, Sir.

[*Exeunt Check and Handy severally.*]

Manent Beverley and Denier.

Bev. You'll dine with us at the *Sçavoir*, Denier?

Denier. That's impossible. Lady Quaver, who subscribes to the opera, has lent her box to Mrs. Carlton and Lydia this evening, and I have promised to attend them; so we must make a short early dinner at home. You will hardly rise from table before the *finale*.

Bew. Time enough to see the Heinel walk over the course; perhaps: but the places of publick diversion do keep most disorderly hours, to be sure. As to the play-houses, I scarce ever attempt to peep into them. There is no getting a mouthful of tragedy or comedy, without balking one's appetite for every thing else. But Lydia is fond of plays too; and the little prude is so eager and punctual, she is as sure to be at the drawing-up of the curtain as if she went to keep places.

Denier. Come, come, after all, you are very partial to my ward, Beverley. She is severe upon your gaiety, and you rally her prudery. You both think it worth while to find fault with each other; and that's a dreadful symptom, Beverley.

Bew. No, no; not so far gone as that neither. —The girl has some good natural qualities; but she has not mixed with the world enough. —She is like one of our English coaches—made of good stuff, and not ill fashion'd—but wants the high Paris varnish, Denier.

Denier. I have a good mind to acquaint her with your comparison. —She'll varnish you till you appear like lord Rusty's pictures—not much the better for it. —But, apropos to your simile,—after your coach has set you down to dinner in St.

James's

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 133

James's Street, can you send it to carry us to the opera?

Bev. To be sure. They are not put up yet. I'll give orders about it immediately.

Denier. Stay! Suppose it takes me home then; and I'll tell them your direction.—I shall hardly get a chair at this time in the morning.

Bev. Be it so. Good night to you.—But, Denier!

Denier. Well.

Bev. There is to be another masquerade next week, at the Haymarket. Will you go?

Denier. No—hang it; next week is too soon for it.—So much of it makes it grow nauseous.

Bev. It will be a genteel thing.

Denier. A genteel masquerade?—Oh, that's the devil, Beverley. The company at a masquerade should be almost as various as the characters they represent.—Countesses and sempstresses, lords, aldermen, black-legs, and Oxonians.—Make your masquerade too genteel, and it must be very dull, Beverley.

Bev. All the fine women in town will be there. It is to be given by the club at Arthur's. I can supply you with tickets.

Denier. Can you?—Well then—come, for once, I will go with you.

134 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

Bev. Now, if you could prevail on Lydia to go too——

Denier. No; she won't take the Paris varnish, Beverley.

Bev. I am sorry for it. Then there's no hopes of her.

Denier. Poor Beverley! Adieu!

Bev. Poor Lydia, I say. I'll go to-bed, and dream of her reformation. Good night to you.

[Exeunt severally.]

A C T II.

Beverley's dressing-room. A writing-desk and dressing-table, chairs, &c.

Bell rings two or three times violently; at length enter Handy, in a morning dress, rubbing his eyes.

Handy.

RING, ring, ring! The devil's in Mr. Beverley to-day, I think. He desires to be waked about one or two, and is ready to pull the bells out of the pullies between eleven and twelve. *[Rings.]* Again! I'll be with you in a moment, Sir. *[Yawns.]*

If

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 135

If he had been at deep play last night, I should have thought his losses had disturbed him—or, if he had been drinking, that his rest was spoil'd with sickness and head-ache.—But to come home sober, and in good humour, and then drag one out of bed like a school-boy, or an apprentice—[*Rings again.*] Well, well, I am coming—Stay till I can get to you, Sir. [*Going.*] Not he, faith—here he is—walking in his sleep, for aught I know—for I am sure, I am hardly awake yet. [*Yawning.*]

Enter Beverley.

Bev. Oh, you are here, I see. I thought you were dead, Handy.

Handy. Dead asleep, Sir. I had hardly got warm in bed, in my first doze, Sir. [*Yawning.*]

Bev. Come, come, my breakfast! I have no time for dozing and dreaming. To keep my engagements at night, I must dispatch a good deal of business in the morning. [*Sits.*] Reach me that bundle of papers. [*Handy brings them from the desk.*] I must answer these letters. Now chocolate, Handy; chocolate immediately!

Handy. [*Aside.*] Whew! [*Exit yawning.*]

Bev. [*Untying the bundle.*] Say what they will of your dull fellows and drudges, men of spirit are

136 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

your only persons of dispatch—diligent in their business for the sake of getting rid of it—not working slowly, grub, grub, like a mole, but straining to the goal like a racer.—Let me see, what have we here? [*Looking at one of the letters.*] Oh, a letter from Mr. Golding's old Quaker friend and correspondent, Ephraim Quiet of Bristol.

Re-enter Handy.

Handy. The chocolate, Sir.

Bev. Very well—Set it down, Handy—and tell Check to come to me with the account I spoke to him about, when I came home last night.

Handy. He's here already, Sir, and Mr. Fable too.

Enter Fable, attended by Check, with books and papers.

Bev. [*Rising.*] Mr. Fable, your very humble servant.

Fable. Oh, your servant, your servant.—Are you sure you have all the books and papers with you, Check?

Check. Very sure, Sir.

Fable. And have you the instrument from my attorney?

Check. It is here, Sir.

Fable. And the balances of the several accounts are all right and exact?

Check.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 137

Check. To the sixteenth of a farthing, Sir; I have proved them again and again, Sir.

Fable. Very well. Lay them on the table then. I shall be with you presently in the counting-house.

Check. You will be sure to find me there, Sir.

[Lays down books, &c. and exit.

Fable. And now indulge me with a word or two in private, Mr. Beverley.

Bev. Pray be seated, Sir. Handy, wait in the antichamber.

Handy. I shall, Sir.

[Exit.

Manent Fable and Beverley, sitting.

Fable. [After a short pause.] I am afraid I have broken in upon you rather abruptly, Mr. Beverley.

Bev. Not at all, Sir.

Fable. My business is pressing, and I must be as abrupt in disclosing it.

Bev. Pray what is it, Sir?

Fable. I should wish to administer comfort, rather than to distress or surprise you; but there is no time for delicacies, or room for palliation.

Bev. You amaze me! What do you mean, Sir?

Fable. Don't be too much alarmed neither; don't let it totally discourage you. You are young, you know——

Bev.

Bev. Relieve me from suspense, I beseech you, Sir.

Fable. Nay, I can't say it is downright ruin neither.

Bev. Ruin, Mr. Fable!

Fable. No; not absolutely. Your credit and character may be both a little shaken by it at first, indeed; but, with industry, thank Heaven, you will have time and opportunity to re-establish them.

Bev. You keep me on the rack! Let me comprehend you. Be plain, Sir!

Fable. In a word then—what do you think of the failure of the house?

Bev. Sir!

Fable. Stopping payment?

Bev. Impossible!

Fable. Ten days ago I was of your opinion.—But those papers, Mr. Beverley, among which are copies of the last letters from Mr. Golding, will convince you that the danger is imminent.

Bev. Why, why was I not more early apprised of this, Mr. Fable?

Fable. You have a great deal on your hands, you know; and I did not care to interrupt your amusements, or damp your vivacity, till I had examined and settled the state of your affairs. I was in hopes,

hopes, indeed, matters had not been so desperate. —But one misfortune is always accompanied by another, and another followed by more.—The insurance not being done on the *Speedwell* and *Thetis*, owing to the miscarriage of Mr. Golding's letters from Bengal; the wreck of both those Indiamen, as well as Mr. Golding's other losses in India; the failure of the houses at Amsterdam; the late run upon our own; and the bills we have accepted being so soon payable—are unlucky circumstances, all concurring to perplex and embarrass us.

Bev. And what—what's to be done then, Mr. Fable?

Fable. Oh, don't be too uneasy! the shock is rather violent and sudden, to be sure; but I hope to extricate you with honour and reputation.

Bev. You revive me. By what means, Sir?

Fable. When you have look'd into the vouchers which *Check* has left with you, you will see the necessity of executing this instrument, constituting me your sole trustee and creditor; I having undertaken to satisfy every other claim and demand upon the house.—All that concerns me is, that, in order to come handsomely through this business, and to appear in earnest to the world, we must exact some co-operation on your part, some little sacrifices from you, Mr. *Beverley*.

Bev.

Bev. Sacrifices from me! what sacrifices, Mr. Fable?

Fable. Not that I think they will affect you much, neither. I was happy, to be sure, to see you keeping the very best company, making a figure on the turf, regularly attending the hunt, and entertaining handsomely both here, and at Wimbledon.—But people in business are liable to these accidents—and pleasure, you know, must give way when pressing exigencies require it. Put your horses to sale, part with your hounds, sell your villa—and as a narrower plan of living, a system of œconomy, will render all the plate and present furniture unnecessary, I think it will be adviseable to lett this house too. A smaller will serve to carry on the business.

Bev. Sell my horses and hounds! part with my houses! dispose of my plate, Mr. Fable! surely this is being rather too precipitate. It should be very maturely considered, whether we cannot smother these evils, without letting them burst into a flame immediately.

Fable. That has been thoroughly considered, depend upon't—nay, I have already convened the capital creditors, and convinced them of the certainty of their demands being satisfied, on the plan I have proposed to you. They are persuaded that
the

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 141

the house will ultimately prove good and sufficient, and have engaged to support it. Some few indeed seemed to doubt your concurrence and perseverance; but I (who think I know you better) undertook to answer for both. The truth is, you have no alternative.—The affair is publick by this time, and the eyes of the whole world are upon you.—But, courage, Beverley! you have youth, as I told you, and honour, and abilities: They are now put to the test, and I have no fear of your conduct. When you have finished your breakfast, run your eye over the account, read Mr. Golding's last letters, examine the deed of trust, and consider what I have said to you. Your servant! Good day to you! Your servant! *[Exit.*

Beverley alone.

What is all this? Vessels uninsured! Failure of correspondents! Letters from Mr. Golding! Losses in India! Sure our situation cannot be so bad as he has represented it.—Let me look into these writings! Let me examine this account!—Handy! —*[Sitting.]* The book of fate could scarcely be more dreadful to me than this mass of papers.

Enter Handy.

Handy. Sir!

Bev.

142 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

Bev. What do you do here, rascal! I am busy. How dare you interrupt me?

Handy. I thought you had called, Sir.

Bev. Get out of the room, firrah, or I'll——

Handy. I beg your pardon, Sir. I am gone, Sir.—What the deuce is the matter with him this morning? *[Exit.*

Beverley alone.

What an unfeeling animal is a mere person of business! Mr. Fable has stunned me: I am thunder-struck: And yet there was a serenity in his manner, a malicious calm in his countenance, that cut me to the soul—I am distracted—I can neither read, nor write, nor think.—Handy! Where are you, rascal? *[Enter Handy.]* Why did not you take these things away, as I ordered you?

Handy. I thought you had not done breakfast, Sir.—A card from Sir Charles Easy, Sir. *[Giving it.*

Bev. Give me no cards, rascal!

[Throwing it away.

Handy. The man waits for an answer, Sir.

Bev. I can send no answer. I'm ill, I'm busy, I'm——I'll send an answer by-and-by—I'll send an answer by-and-by.

Handy. Very well. I'll let him know, Sir. *[Exit.*

Beverley

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 143

Beverley alone.

Let me see ! let me collect my thoughts a little !
Suppose I advise with Denier ! suppose——

Enter Handy.

Handy. A letter, Sir !—requires no answer, they
say. *[Exit.]*

Beverley alone.

From Lucy ! I know her hand. *[Looking at the superscription]* I must look into it ; but what poor spirits have I at present to peruse letters of gaiety ! Her tendernefs too—*[Opens and reads.]* What's this ?

“ Sir Harry Flutter has heard of your misfortunes, and convinced me that I should be a burthen to you. He has offered to be my friend ; so adieu, Beverley ! Your's, Lucy.”

Confusion !—the business is publick indeed then—But so soon to desert me !—To be the cast lover of a cast mistress to half the town ? But let her go ! let her go ! an ungrateful jade ! My friends will execrate her. All my numerous acquaintance will despise her. She'll be the scoff, the scorn of——

Enter Lord Riot, Sir Helter Skelter, Colonel Rakish, and Scanty.

L. Riot. Beverley !—why, what the devil is all this ?

this? the whole town is talking of you. Is there any truth in this story? You are undone, they say.

Bev. No; not undone, my lord.

Col. Rak. The St. James's Coffee-house is full of it; and Betty talks of nothing else.

Bev. Damnation!

Sir Helt. I was offered ten to one at the Cocoa-Tree, that you and all your partners would be in the Gazette next Saturday. Shall I take the odds, Beverley?

Bev. The house has not stopt payment, Sir!—Confusion!

Scanty. No, no; not so bad as that—a little crash, indeed—but I said the house would not stop payment. I was always your friend, Mr. Beverley.

Bev. I am obliged to you, Sir.—Vexation!

Col. Rak. They say, old Golding has made a sad hand of it in India. An old blockhead! What did he meddle for? Why, you could have ruined yourself fast enough, without his assistance—Poor little Lucy too! she'll be on the *pavée* again. I have half a mind to take compassion on her myself.—But she's so cursed fond of Beverley, there would be no dependance on her.

L. Riot. Well, but, Beverley! Your place at Wimbledon is to be put up at auction, it seems.—

A-going,

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 145

A-going, a-going, a-going!—So we are to have no dinner there next Sunday, I suppose?

Bev. No, no, no, no, my lord! Distraction!

Sir Helt. As you'll part with that set of bay ponies, and the phaeton, I suppose, I wish you'd give me the refusal. You should think of your friends, Beverley.

Bev. Another time! another time, Sir!

L. Riot. Ay, I know we interrupt him! He is in the midst of all his writings and accounts, you see. I shall be glad to see you, when you have leisure. Good day to you, Beverley!

Sir Helt. }

Col. Rak. } Adieu! adieu, Beverley!

[*Exeunt L. Riot, Sir Helt. and Col. Rakish.*

Manent Scanty and Beverley.

Scanty. See what a set of washy-minded fellows these are now!—It is well you are rid of them. Did not I always warn you to be cautious of your company?

Bev. I thank you for your advice; but it distresses me at present, Sir.

Scanty. Well, well, I'll say no more then—I am glad to find matters not so bad as they have been reported. You'll keep your head above water

VOL. II.

L

yet,

yet, I hope.—I just staid to mention the affair of the twenty pounds you promised me, the last time I saw you.

Bev. This is not a time for affairs of that sort, Sir.

Scanty. Well, well—I would not have mentioned it—but that last match at billiards was not quite settled, you know.

Bev. There, Sir—there's a bank-note of the value.—Now leave me, I beseech you, Sir.

Scanty. Well, well,—I see you are busy, and I will leave you—But for the future remember my counsel—stick to my advice—always be cautious in the choice of your company, Beverley! [*Exit.*

Beverley alone.

So, so, so, so!—This is *the world*, as they call it—A pack of hollow friends, and despicable acquaintance! How weak have I been, to give my heart to these wretches, who have souls incapable of mutual attachment! Callous to distress, and dead to the feelings of humanity!—How I long to see Denier! He is a true friend—frugal without avarice, and chearful without dissipation. He would both advise and assist me.—He would presently——

Enter

Enter Denier.

Ha, Denier ! I was this moment wishing for you. You have heard, I suppose !

Denier. I have, I have, Beverley ; and ran to you immediately—though I had particular business in the city too this morning—but a friend has promised to transact it for me. How are you, Beverley ?

Bev. What a blow, my friend ! From whom had you the first news of it ?

Denier. From Mr. Fable himself. He came to me on my own affairs, as well as about a large remittance which he has just received on account of Lydia.

Bev. Lydia !—Oh, Denier !—Lydia ! [*Sighing.*]—a large remittance, did you say ?

Denier. Yes, from her friends in India, who consigned her to our family. A very considerable remittance, indeed ! But Mr. Fable is made trustee, I find. They treat her as the court of Chancery does a lunatick. We are committees of her person, and Mr. Fable committee of the estate.

Bev. Excuse me, Denier ! but the very shadow of mirth is at present unseasonable. I am glad, however, that Lydia is likely to be so amply provided for.

[*Sighing.*

Denier.

Denier. So am I: and I am glad too that you have always professed so total an indifference about her; as a disappointment from any reverse of fortune, in case you had fixed your affections on her, would have been an additional mortification.—But, Beverley!

Bev. My friend!

Denier. You are convinced, I believe, of the truth of my regard for you.

Bev. I never doubted it.

Denier. That I have the most affectionate friendship for you.

Bev. I am sure of it.

Denier. You don't imagine me capable of proposing any thing that might be disagreeable to you?

Bev. The last man on earth I should suspect of it.

Denier. I think too, on your part, Beverley, that you would not, from a mere point of delicacy, oppose or repine at my happiness, if it did not interfere with your own.

Bev. No, to be sure, I should not. But what is all this? Explain.

Denier. You must know then, Beverley, that I began very early to be captivated with Lydia.

Bev. Eh!

Denier.

Denier. But fancying you entertained a partiality for her, I smothered my inclination out of friendship for you. But as you meant only superficial gallantry, I now wish to make her serious proposals.

Bev. Proposals to Lydia?

Denier. Yes, proposals of marriage; and indeed it seems almost to have been the wish of her friends to bring about such an alliance, by placing her in our family.

Bev. That's true—that did not occur to me at first, I confess—she too, I suppose, has given you some hopes—I wish you happy—I wish you—I wish you a great deal of happiness, Mr. Denier.

[*Disordered.*]

Denier. Thank you, my dear friend, thank you!—But come, come, Beverley! Mr. Fable's news has quite disheartened you. We must not see you too much cast down, neither. This is but a cloud. You will break out again with double splendor presently.—Can I be of any service to you? Shall I look into your papers—and examine your accounts?

Bev. Not at present, I am obliged to you—not at present, Mr. Denier.

Denier. Oh, I had forgot. All my money is locked up: But if you should want a purchaser for

150 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

the Beverley estate, on that occasion, I dare say, my friends would supply me. You may always command me, you know.

Bev. I know it. I am obliged to you.

Denier. Let me see! [*Looking at his watch.*] It is not so late as I thought it was—that Solomon is a puzzling, stupid, old fellow—I had better go up to the Alley, and look after the business myself, I believe—unless I could be of any use to you by staying here, Beverley.

Bev. Not in the least. I beg I mayn't hinder you.

Denier. Good day to you then! I can turn an eighth, I dare say, this morning. Good day, Beverley! [*Exit.*]

Beverley alone.

Now am I completely miserable. Fool, ideot, that I have been! to trifle with a delicate female heart—to trifle with my own!—Oh, Lydia! I am now, for the first time, thoroughly sensible of my affection for you;—and now to discover it, only to add to my wretchedness! Distraction!—Denier too seems to wear a different aspect—at least my imagination, jaundiced by my misfortunes, paints him of another colour.—But Lydia! after the impertinence of my former behaviour, how despicable must I appear to her! What a humiliating distance
has

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 151

has fortune now thrown between us!—Mrs. Golding here? New torture! Ha! Lydia with her! Oh, my heart! how shall I look up to her!

Enter Mrs. Golding (in a morning dishabille.)

Mrs. Gold. Nay, come in, child! pray come in! I must speak to poor Beverley. Come in, Miss Lydia, I beg of you [*Beverley runs to the door and introduces Lydia*].—Ay, take care of her, kinsman! She is a delicate soul, and as much shocked as if she were your sister.—But, for Heaven's sake, child, what is this rigmarole story that Mr. Fable has distracted us about?

Bev. A very serious affair, indeed, madam.

Mrs. Gold. Serious! he's always serious, I think—preaching, preaching, for ever preaching! Like lady Tott'nam, that builds all the Methodist chapels.—But it's a strange thing Mr. Golding should never write me word of all this business.

Bev. I have not yet examined the proofs; but dare say, Mr. Fable has just grounds for his proceedings.

Mrs. Gold. Lord, lord! how this breaks into all my arrangements! The glass over my dressing-room chimney-piece is stuck round with cards, one upon another—I am promised the whole town over

for these three months. But it's no matter—they'll be the death of me—so it don't signify.

[Throws herself into a chair.]

Bev. We must look forward, madam. The prospect is a little gloomy at present, but promises to clear again. No endeavours shall be wanting on my part.

Mrs. Gold. No, I dare say. You were always a good creature—a great favourite of mine, you know, always—But I can't tell what possessed them to make you a Man of Business. If they had been ruled by me, they would have put you into the guards. You would have made a sweet figure in a regimental: Would not he, Lydia? And then you'd have had as little to do as Colonel Parade or Captain Gilliflower. But I'll look into the red book—the only book worth looking into—and see if we can't use our interest to get you some little snug sinecure—a commissioner of trade, perhaps, or a lord of the admiralty.

Bev. I begin to feel we have no dependence but on ourselves, madam.

Mrs. Gold. Well, well—may-be not, kinsman—and yet we have a very genteel set of acquaintance.—But, mercy on me, what a figure do I make, if any body should call, in this muslin shade,

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 153

shade, and queen's night-cap! Lydia, my dear! let me leave you here a minute or two, while I shuffle on my things—and then come to me in my dressing-room. Your conversation is better than hartshorn or lavender. Poor Beverley here looks as dismal, as young lady Grizzle on her marriage with old Sir Solomon. *[Exit.]*

Manent Beverley and Lydia.

[They remain some time silent.]

Bev. Excuse me, madam, if I venture to express how deeply I am sensible of your appearing to be affected by my misfortunes: And yet I cannot but confess that I feel your compassion almost as painfully as a reproach—for I am conscious I have not deserved it.

Lydia. Touched as I am with the reverse of your situation, Mr. Beverley, I will not dissemble to you that I am pleased with the change in your behaviour.

Bev. Still, still, this very approbation serves to reproach me with the impropriety of my late conduct towards you. I feel it; I request your forgiveness of it; and should be happy to pass the rest of my life in endeavouring to atone it.

Lydia. Make no apologies to me, Mr. Beverley;
I have

I have no right to expect them, nor has your conduct rendered them necessary. Most young gentlemen who pique themselves on their knowledge of the world, act much in the same manner as you behaved to me.

Bev. It is too true; but it is not the swarm of coxcombs that renders them less impertinent or troublesome. I ought not to have adopted their contemptuous airs, without being master also of their tame insensibility; yet I had youth to plead in excuse for my vanities; and I flatter myself, that time and reflection—and another motive, that distracts me when I think of it—might have rendered me an object less unworthy your compassion. Calamity has torn the veil from my eyes, and I now see, but too plainly, not only your excellence, but my own imperfections.

Lydia. Calamity is a severe master, yet amendment can scarce be purchased too dearly: And as your errors have been venial, your distress may be but transient; nay, may, perhaps, at last be the means of your happiness.

Bev. Impossible! impossible! However I may be restored to affluence, I can never, never taste of happiness. I have thrown away—perhaps wantonly too—I have thrown away the jewel that
should

should have been the pride and blessing of my life. —Oh, Lydia! the feelings of worldly distress are nothing to the agonies of a despairing affection. My situation extorts from me what I have hitherto endeavoured to conceal, even from myself. I love you—I feel I long have loved you—though wretch and fool enough to be almost ashamed of a passion in which I ought to have gloried. I am now punished for it—heaven knows, severely punished—perhaps too severely—by losing the very hopes of ever obtaining you.

Lydia. Do not run from one dangerous extreme to another, Mr. Beverley; but guard against despondency, as well as vanity and presumption. I see you are much agitated, much dejected; and what it would, perhaps, have been dangerous and unpardonable to have owned to you but yesterday, to-day I shall not scruple to declare. Hurried away, as you were, by a torrent of fashionable vanities, and the poor ambition of keeping high company, I thought I could discern in your mind and disposition no mean understanding, nor ungenerous principles—too good for the associates you had selected, and too susceptible not to be in danger from such society. It is no wonder, therefore, if I felt any growing partiality for you, that I endeavoured to restrain it.

Bev.

Bev. To restrain it! Say rather, to extinguish it.—Oh, I now perceive all my wretchedness.—But, to be supplanted by my bosom-friend! by Denier!

Lydia. I am at a loss to comprehend you.

Bev. He confessed to me his passion for you but this very morning—not an hour ago, he declared to me his intention of making you serious proposals.

Lydia. Such proposals would be sure of being rejected—rejected with the utmost indignation.

Bev. What do I hear? May I still hope then? And are you resolved not to listen to his addresses?

Lydia. I am too well acquainted with his character. His manners, indeed, are lively, and his worldly turn enables him to work himself into the friendship of others; especially, those like yourself, Mr. Beverley—of an undefigning open-hearted character—in order to avail himself of their foibles, promote his interest, and gratify his penury. Rely not too securely on the warmth of his professions! Steady to no point but his interest, you will find him shifting in his conduct, according to the revolutions in your fortune. He seemed at first desirous to unite me to you; but now, hearing, I suppose, of the alteration in your circumstances, and the late remittances in my favour, it is perfectly

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 157

fectly agreeable to his sentiments, to endeavour to supplant you. As yet, however, he has made me no overtures.

Bev. So far then, at least, he is not unfaithful. But, oh, my Lydia! may I interpret your repugnance to his addresses as an argument in my favour?

Lydia. I have already frankly declared my opinion of your character. It now remains with you to prove the truth of that opinion, and to determine my resolution accordingly. Do but bear up against adversity, so as to shew yourself equal to the possible return of prosperity—a trial, perhaps, ten times more dangerous—and be assured, Mr. Beverley, that, with the approbation of my friends, I shall be happy to give every proof of my esteem for so valuable a character.

Bev. My dearest Lydia! [*kissing her hand*] Modest, amiable Lydia! When you avow esteem, let me presume to construe it affection! Oh, Lydia, you have made me fond of my misfortunes. Ease and affluence corrupted me, and had so weakened and enervated my mind, that the rough stroke of adversity would have stunned me beyond the power of recovery, had not your gentle hand raised me to the hope of happiness. Take your pupil,

158 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

pupil, Lydia; and render him—for you only can effect it—oh, render him worthy of so dear, so exquisite a mistress! [Exeunt.

A C T III.

An Apartment in Golding's House.

Enter Servant, shewing in Tropick.

Servant.

WHAT must I say to Mr. Fable, Sir?

Trop. Only let him know that his old friend, Mr. Tropick, the ship's husband, desires to speak with him.

Serv. I shall, Sir.

[Exit.

Tropick alone.

Yes, I shall speak to him—and pretty roundly too, I believe.—What times we live in! No morals, no order, no decency! Barefaced villainy at one end of the town, and villainy in a mask at the other!—But my old friend here a hypocrite! I should almost as soon have mistrusted myself. It is an unthankful office to give advice and reproof; but it is the duty, as well as privilege, of those who have been long acquainted with each other,
to

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 159

to let an old friend know, that all the world thinks him a scoundrel.—Oh, here he is. I'll give it him—I'll lecture him—I'll——

Enter Fable.

Fable. Ha! my old friend, Tropick! How are you? how do you?

Trop. Well, very well.

Fable. I am glad on't; I rejoice to see you.

Trop. May be so, may be so.

Fable. And your family?—All well, I hope.

Trop. All very well.

Fable. And the young supercargo?—How does he go on?

Trop. Mighty well, mighty well.

Fable. Excellent!—And his elder brother, that was placed at Madrafs, is he removed to Bengal yet, as he proposed?

Trop. He is, he is; but——

Fable. That's right: Madrafs for health, Bengal for wealth!—that's the maxim there, you know.

Trop. Very true, very true; but——

Fable. And Mrs. Tropick too—How is she? How is your wife?

Trop. Pshaw! let my wife alone! I want to speak with you, old Fable; I want to speak with you.

Fable.

Fable. Well; why don't you then?

Trop. Because you hinder me. You stop my mouth with enquiries, and won't let me squeeze in a syllable edgeways—A plague of your questions!

Fable. Well, speak. I am all attention. What have you to say to me?

Trop. Have you a friend or acquaintance in the world?

Fable. I think so; some few true friends, many more very suspicious, and a number of common acquaintance.

Trop. And do you expect to keep one, that has common sense or common honesty, for the future?

Fable. Yes;—and yourself in particular.—But what's the matter? If you think I have done any thing wrong, it would be but friendly to tell me so.

Trop. I came on purpose to tell you; I came on purpose to abuse you, old Fable.

Fable. I am obliged to you; but for what reason?

Trop. Every honest man should not only abhor a crime, but even keep clear of suspicion.

Fable. Impossible.

Trop. How so?

Fable.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 161

Fable. Both are not in his power. Not to be criminal, indeed, lies in his own breast ! but suspicion and calumny, in the breasts and mouths of others. You consider yourself as an honest man, I suppose.

Trop. Zounds ! I know I am, without considering at all.

Fable. And yet, honest as you are, you could no more prevent my thinking you a rascal, were I inclined to believe you one, than I could hinder your calling me so.

Trop. I tell you, all the world calls you so. It is the talk of the whole city—the Alley is full of it—the 'Change rings with it—and by and by, I suppose, the talkers in Leadenhall-street will harangue about it. You are pretty well paragraphed already, old Fable.

Fable. I can't help their talking or writing. I can only take care not to deserve it.

Trop. Not deserve it !—Why, was not Golding, the great banker here, your old friend and acquaintance ?

Fable. Most intimately so ; most confidentially ; or, at his departure for India, he would scarce have trusted his whole family and affairs to my care, with the particular charge of young Beverley.

162 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

Trop. Oh, did he so?—Now we are come to the point then.—And a fine guardian you have shewn yourself—a pretty friend to Mr. Golding too! You have staggered the credit of the house, driven the poor young fellow almost out of his senses, and made yourself his sole trustee and creditor. Every body sees what you drive at—but the court of Chancery may bring you to account yet, old Fable.

Fable. Let the parties file their bill at their pleasure—or rather, do you be my chancellor.

Trop. I your chancellor!

Fable. Yes, you, my friend. I'll put in my answer immediately—but remember, that while I call upon your judgment in equity, I must also insist on your secrecy.

Trop. What! keep it a secret that you are an honest man?—Let all the world suppose you a scoundrel?

Fable. No matter. Don't let your zeal for my character teach them to unriddle the mystery at present; but rather assist me in carrying on my project. First, however, promise silence. Give me your word, old friend.

Trop. My honour—Now you know you are sure of me.

Fable. I am convinced of it. You must know, then,

then, that the danger of the house, and the ruin of young Beverley, is all a mere fiction.

Trop. A lie!—Zounds! to what purpose?

Fable. The best in the world.—A white lie, my friend! to rescue Beverley, and save Mr. Golding.

Trop. A white lie?—I don't understand you. Explain.

Fable. The young man was in the high road to destruction, and driving at such a rate that he must soon have overfet the whole undertaking.—It was time to pull the check-string.—To speak plainly; intoxicated as he was by pleasure and vanity, and countenanced by Mrs. Golding, who ought to have discouraged him, direct advice would have been thrown away upon him. But could I stand by a silent and inactive spectator of the ruin of a whole family? No. Finding him incorrigible by softer means, I conjured up the phantom of poverty. The measures I have taken have already brought him to reason; he promises to become a new man; I shall ultimately appear to be a true friend; and the credit of the house will be more firmly established than ever.

Trop. I am speechless—struck dumb—you have taken my breath away—I have not a word to say against you—you are a very worthy, sensible, honest

fellow, old Fable. You have redeemed your friend Golding, and will be the making of the young fellow's fortune.

Fable. Nay, I can't take the credit of his reformation entirely to myself neither. He is in love, it seems, with a most amiable young lady, whose tenderness is redoubled by his misfortunes, while no calamity seems to affect his mind but the imaginary want of a fortune suitable to his pretensions to her.

Trop. And how can you answer it to yourself, to retain his money in your hands, when he wishes to make so laudable a use of it?

Fable. I don't mean to retain it. Finding Beverley in so fair a way of amendment, I have already set another wheel in motion, and (unknown to him) circulated a report of a sudden turn of fortune in his favour.

Trop. Unknown to him, d'ye say?

Fable. Totally; and it is pleasant enough to see how awkwardly he receives the civilities which are paid to him in consequence of this report, while, unconscious of the cause, he expects (according to the way of the world) nothing but slights and reproaches. To confirm the report, however, and to put him into good humour with himself again,

I mean

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 165

I mean to send a pretended agent or messenger to him, with letters and considerable remittances, as from Mr. Golding. All I want is a trusty person to discharge such a commission.

Trop. Can I be of any use to you?

Fable. Infinite, if you would undertake this negotiation.

Trop. I!—Why, I am unknown in the family, 'tis true—but then the letters—Mr. Golding's hand, you know——

Fable. Oh, reasons may be assigned for his making use of another hand.—Besides, they won't be examined so nicely. You come to bring money, not to receive it—and that makes a wide difference. But we lose time.—Will you assist me?

Trop. I will—hand and heart—body and soul, old Fable. Let me have the stores, sails, masts, and rigging, and I'll fit him out as handsomely as any vessel I ever furnished in my life. You are a true-hearted, sound-bottomed fellow, old Fable. But what an ass have I made of myself!—Here did I come open-mouthed to reproach you for your roguery; and now you have persuaded me to become your accomplice.

Fable. My ally—leagued in honour, not combined and confederated in villany. But, come with

me to my closet, and I'll furnish you with the needful.

Trap. I'll follow you ; but I must, I must ask your pardon first. It touched me to the quick to hear you were a rascal, and I could not help telling you so.—I beg your pardon again, and again, and again, my friend. You are one of the worthiest men in the world—But, you know, there are not a more silly, empty, insolent, impudent, ignorant, lying vermin, than your framers of common reports, and collectors of personal paragraphs—wretches that pretend to know every thing, and know nothing. Your thoughts, words and actions, they know them all ; what you have done, what you are doing, and what you intend to do, they know ; know what a Papist tells his confessor, or the king whispers the queen ; things that never have been, will be, nor are like to be, still they know—true or false, right or wrong, praise or blame, they don't care a halfpenny.—And I, to give a moment's credit to them ! Forgive me this once, my friend ; and for the future, without certain authority, I'll never believe a word I hear from common report, or depend upon a syllable I read in the news-papers.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 167

The street.

Enter Lord Riot and Colonel Rakish.

Col. Rak. But do you think there is any truth in this report, my lord?

Lord Riot. Fact—you may depend upon't. A proctor from the city, who came to me about my suit with lady Riot, now depending in the Commons, told me that he heard it at the St. Paul's Coffee-house, from a gentleman that brought the news piping-hot from Sir George Sterling at Garraway's, and from other particular friends of old Fable.

Col. Rak. So then Beverley is upon his legs again, and Golding is not ruined, after all.

L. Riot. Full of treasure as a mine, with a certain income as large as a jaghire—sent home whole lacks of rupees by the last Indiaman, and bushels of diamonds as plenty as Scotch pebbles.

Col. Rak. A lucky turn for Beverley! I wish I had known it before; I would not have black-balled him at Stapylton's; but, faith, I thought he had nothing for it but to shoot himself.

L. Riot. He is actually meditating a very desperate action. I hear he is going to be married.

Col. Rak. Ay? to whom, my lord?

M 4

L. Riot.

L. Riot. Why, to miss—Oh, here he is, to give an account of himself.

Enter Beverley.

How do you, how do you, Beverley? Nay, never look so grave and serious, man! I know you have no occasion. But why did you not call as I desired you, Beverley? I love to serve you, and should have been very glad to see you?

Bev. I am obliged to your lordship, but I have been engaged in particular business.

L. Riot. Business! You used to think pleasure your business.

Bev. And now, thank heaven, I have learnt to think business my pleasure.

Col. Rak. Ah, that's the true language of a man that is making a fortune and rolling in money, my lord. But, Beverley, my dear boy, why did you not call on me, if you ever thought there was the least shadow of an occasion? You must be sure that all I could command was entirely at your service.

Bev. I am obliged to you, colonel; but there was not the least necessity for it.

L. Riot. No, no; so it seems. I am very glad to hear it. Will you look in upon us at Almack's this evening, Beverley?

Bev.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 169

Bev. It will not be in my power, my lord.

Col. Rak. We dine at the Tilt-Yard Coffee-house to-day. There is some excellent claret. Will you go along with us, Beverley.

Bev. Not now, I thank you, colonel; I am going to Mr. Denier.

L. Riot. Well; let us see you soon; don't forsake your friends, Beverley.

Col. Rak. No; don't let us lose you; come amongst us soon, my boy. In the mean time, I wish you much joy.

L. Riot. So do I. Good day, Beverley!

Col. Rak. Good day, good day to you, Beverley!

[*Exeunt Lord Riot and Colonel Rakish.*]

Beverley alone.

With me joy! what do they mean? surely, not to insult me! No, no; their manner was frank, and hearty, and cordial.—And yet, I thought they behaved oddly on the first shock of my affairs. But, perhaps, my sensibility was too quick on that occasion, and my confusion on the breaking-out of my misfortunes made me see every thing through a false medium. Yes, yes, I dare say I wronged my friends, and I am heartily concerned at it.

Enter

270 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

Enter Cash.

Cash. Oh, Mr. Beverley, your servant! I am glad I have found you. I have just been at your house to desire you to discount these bills. They are indorsed by good men, and have not above a fortnight or three weeks to run, Sir.

Bev. Discount, Mr. Cash? What do you mean; You know I never venture to do any thing of that sort at present.

Cash. Not venture, indeed!—Well said, Mr. Beverley; you are pleased to be pleasant.

Bev. I wish you would please to be serious. I am so, I can assure you, Mr. Cash.

Cash. What! you won't discount the bills then?

Bev. No.

Cash. Consider the names at the back of them.

Bev. No matter. It don't suit us.

Cash. "It don't suit us,"—that's the banker's old answer in the negative.—When you're come to that, I am sure you won't do it—I am sorry for it—I must try some other house—Your servant. [*Exit.*

Bev. Yours!—Now for Denier. [*Going.*

Enter Hazard.

Haz. Mr. Beverley! one word with you, if you please.

Bev.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 171

Bev. [*turning.*] Mr. Hazard! Your pleasure, Sir?

Haz. We have a policy here on Sir Francis Racket, insured for a year for twelve thousand—and we should be glad of your name at the bottom of it.

Bev. My name, Mr. Hazard!

Haz. If you please, Sir.—There is a handsome premium, and Sir Francis is a very good life—He was shewn at the coffee-house yesterday—a very good life—not above six or seven and twenty—a little wild, indeed; but suicide and the hands of justice, you know, are always excepted.

Bev. I pretend to underwrite, Mr. Hazard! Do you want to ruin me entirely?

Haz. Ruin you! ha, ha, ha! ruin you—a very good jest, faith—I wish I was ruined your way, Mr. Beverley.

[*Laughing.*]

Bev. Do you laugh at me?

Haz. No, no—I don't laugh at you—but upon my word you make me merry, Mr. Beverley.—Poor ruined gentleman! ha, ha!—Will you fill up the policy, Sir?

Bev. No, not at fifty *per cent.* Sir. You know my situation; and let me tell you, Sir, I look upon your application at this time as impertinent—particularly impertinent.

[*Turns aside.*]

Haz.

172 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

Haz. Know my situation ! Lord, how some folks swell on their good fortune ! He is turning fine gentleman again already, I perceive.—Impertinent, quotha !—I wish he would have set his name to the policy, tho'—I would rather not have had an Israelite among the underwriters—however, let the worst come to the worst, we are sure of little Abraham at last. Impertinent, indeed ! [*Exit.*

Beverley alone.

This affront, among many other mortifications, is brought upon me by my past folly and imprudence. Not only censured by the sensible and the generous, but reproached by the base, ridiculed by the malicious, and insulted by the meanest of mankind—Confusion !—But it is no wonder that I should be treated contemptuously by others, when my conduct has rendered me so thoroughly despicable even to myself. [*Exit.*

An apartment in Denier's house.

Enter Lydia and Denier.

Lydia. Nay, cease, I beseech you, Sir ! Do not, by urging me on a point so very disagreeable, render it too painful a task to preserve that respect for you, that I wish to maintain !

Denier. Engaging Lydia ! How much your reserve

reserve becomes you. Yet, let me flatter myself it is mere coyness ; and these little pruderies ; for so I will suppose them—call forth new graces in your character, and revive the flame you would attempt to extinguish.

Lydia. It is, however, with a peculiar ill grace, Sir, that you now pretend to discover in me these latent qualifications.—You, who seemed lately so desirous of recommending Mr. Beverley, and now, from what motive you know best, honouring me with your own addresses.

Denier. Beverley !—Beverley is convinced of my inviolable friendship for him—but it is no wonder, Lydia, that I, who had daily and hourly opportunities of contemplating your perfections, should be more deeply struck, than he that saw you but occasionally. I should not, however, such is my regard for him, have urged my own suit, without being previously assured of his absolute indifference.

Lydia. Indifference ! As to that, Sir, Mr. Beverley's indifference, or Mr. Beverley's partiality, in this instance, is not at all material. I am placed in your family, it is true ; and my situation in life is not as yet positively ascertained. I was taught to believe, indeed, that I should ere now have been received and acknowledged by my friends :

But

But I consider some late events as an earnest of their speedy appearance, and I trust they will offer no violence to my inclinations. I am determined, at least, in my own breast; and be assured, Sir, that no interest, no force, no time, shall shake my resolution.

Denier. Your friends, madam, may possibly be of a different opinion; and though I might not wish them to put any constraint on you, they will hardly be partial to the ruinous state of poor Beverley.

Lydia. In you, Sir, his intimate friend, such a reflection is particularly ungenerous: Yet do not presume too much upon that notion, Sir! Whatever I may think of Mr. Beverley, fortune at least appears inclined to favour him.

Denier. Riddles! riddles, Lydia!

Lydia. You have not heard the late news then. He now seems as much courted by prosperity, as he was but lately threatened by misfortunes: And I am this moment going with Mrs. Carlton, to give Mrs. Golding joy on the occasion.

Denier. And to congratulate Beverley?

Lydia. Perhaps so—but be that as it may, you must at least allow that I have dealt candidly with you. Grave as I may seem, Sir, I would not wish to appear a prude; and I scorn all coquetry. [*Exit.*

Denier.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 175

Denier alone.

Yes, yes; she's fond of Beverley, I see—doatingly fond of him! and when a sentimental lady is once touched by a fond passion, the rage is incurable.—But this sudden turn of fortune too in his favour—that I warrant has its effect with her—gold, gold, will have its weight—I shall soon know the particulars.—In the mean time, suppose I make a merit with Beverley of sacrificing my passion to him.—He certainly likes her; and it will be a cheap piece of generosity to resign that which I have no hopes of obtaining. I love to husband my good offices: Ay, ay! that's the true policy! to gain the good will of others, without touching your own property.—Make a small present to those that you are sure want nothing at all, and it turns to account, like money put out at high interest.—And ever, ever open your purse, and offer to lend to those, who you know have no occasion to borrow!

Enter Beverley.

Ha! Beverley! you're welcome. Good day to you!

Bev. Good day, Denier! I was impatient to see you.

Denier. Yes, I dare say. I knew you would not
be

be long out of the house. But come; confess honestly, Beverley! Was this visit wholly designed for me? Was it not partly—nay, chiefly—intended for Lydia?

Bev. Lydia!—Lydia!—I should have been very glad to see Lydia—I hope she is well.

Denier. Very well—and very much at your service—very much at your service, Beverley.

Bev. What do you mean?

Denier. I mean what I say—and I have been thinking too on what passed at our last meeting, Beverley.

Bev. On what subject?

Denier. Nay, nay; there is but one subject of any consequence now, you know. But I am afraid you disssembled with your friend a little. You should be frank and generous with me. The commerce of friendship can't subsist without it; and I have that title to the knowledge of what passes in your breast, Beverley.

Bev. It was then in a state of insurrection, and I was not master of its emotions, nor, indeed, well able to marshal or distinguish them: But you know I never scrupled to lay my heart open to you.

Denier. Why, to do you justice, I believe your not being explicit, arose from the agitation of your mind

mind at that instant, rather than from want of sincerity—and I was a little slow of apprehension on my part—but now we perfectly understand each other.—I see you love Lydia: I am sure of it—and, out of friendship and regard to you, my dear Beverley—I frankly give up all my pretensions to her.

Bev. Generous, generous Denier!

Denier. Not at all—not at all—all my good offices with her friends, my correspondents in India, Mr. Fable, and your own family, you have a right to command.

Bev. Your kindness overwhelms me. How shamefully was I disposed for a time to do injustice to friendship! I now despise the mean and narrow common-place maxims, of our friends falling off from us. There is a jealousy in the unfortunate—an unworthy suspicion of neglect and contempt on account of their distresses—My slightest acquaintance have given me proofs of their good will, and your friendship is above all acknowledgment.

Denier. I am happy in an occasion of testifying my unquestionable regard for you.

Bev. I don't doubt it.

Denier. Depend on it.

178 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

Bev. My best friend !

Denier. My dear, dear Beverley !

[*Exeunt, pressing hands, embracing, protesting, &c.*

A C T IV.

An apartment in Golding's house.

Enter Fable and Check.

Fable.

THIS way, this way, Check ! And are you sure, quite sure, this is fact ?

Check. Too true, Sir.

Fable. Speculated in India-stock, do you say ?

Check. To an incredible amount, Sir ! here's the particular, Sir.

Fable. Let me see—let me see—[*looking at the paper.*] Confusion !—and had you no knowledge or suspicion of these transactions till now, Check ?

Check. Not the least item, Sir. Little Smouse the broker is but just gone, and says he has done more stock for my young master, than for half the rest of the alley.

Fable. What imprudence ! what madness !

Check.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 179

Check. High play, indeed, Sir! Sir Charles Ducat of Mincing-lane, and my young master, it seems, have had the whole game between them. My young master is the bull, and Sir Charles is the bear. He agreed for stock, expecting it to be up at three hundred by this time; but, lack-a-day, Sir, it has been falling ever since.—You know the rescouter day, Sir; and if Mr. Beverley does not pay his differences within these four-and-twenty hours, the world cannot hinder his being a lame duck.

Fable. It scarce signifies what becomes of him—a prodigal!—But my friend Mr. Golding—

Check. Ay, if Mr. Beverley fails, the whole house must suffer, Sir. Having stood the late run upon us, our credit was firmer than ever.—But, after a tumble in the Alley, our notes will no more pass than a light guinea.

Fable. Is Mr. Beverley within?

Check. I thought I heard him come in just as I was following you hither, Sir.

Fable. Let him know I desire to speak with him.

Check. I will, Sir. [Exit.

Fable alone.

So!—To trifle with serious matters is playing with fire, I find. The ruin I counterfeited is now

N 2

becoming

becoming real; and the measures I embraced to reform Beverley, and save my friend, will only serve to hasten their destruction. The suddenness of the alarm confounds me. The shortness of the time too!—Oh, you are here, Sir.

Enter Beverley.

Bev. To attend your pleasure, Sir.

Fable. To witness your own irretrievable ruin, Sir!—How comes it, Mr. Beverley, how comes it, I say, that you have hitherto kept your adventuring in the Alley, your infamous gambling in India-stock, so profound a secret from me?

Bev. Spare your reproaches, Mr. Fable! They are needless. I know all my fault, and all my misery. Ruin and infamy now stare me in the face, and drive me to despair. The vain hopes I had cherished of avoiding both are frustrated; and there is not at this moment a more pitiable object than the wretch you now see before you.

Fable. Pitiable! And what part of your conduct, Sir, has entitled you to compassion?—To that compassion, which the characteristick humanity of this nation has ever shewn to the unfortunate?—sometimes, indeed, to the imprudent?—Have you, Sir, any claim to this? You, who have so grossly abused the mutual confidence between
man

man and man, and betrayed the important trust reposed in you—What! a banker! a banker, Mr. Beverley, not only squandering his own fortune, but playing with the property of others!—the property of unconscious persons silently melting away, as if by forgery, under his hands, without their own prodigality!—And is such a man, because he is at length buried in the ruin he has pulled down on others, an object of compassion? No, Sir, nothing is to be lamented but the mildness of his punishment.

Bev. The very atrociousness of his crime, the pungency of his guilt and remorse, which put him upon a rack severer than any penal laws could devise, still render him an object of pity.

Fable. Your remorse and reformation, I fear, were but hypocrisy. Where was that ingenuous confidence that would else have prompted you to lay open this dark transaction, as well as the rest of your unjustifiable extravagance? Your candour, in that instance, would at least have argued the sincerity of your professions, and afforded a real proof of your penitence.

Bev. Oh, Sir, do not attribute my silence to deceit! I had been taught to hope and believe that the event would have proved prosperous; and

thought to have surpris'd you, and charmed Lydia, with my unexpected good fortune. But, oh, what a cruel reverse have I now to experience!

Fable. A reverse that the daily experience of thousands might have warn'd you to avoid, rather than to build your hopes on such a sandy foundation. The tide of eastern riches flowing in upon us, which might have scattered plenty over our country, such adventurers as you, Mr. Beverley, have rendered the parent of poverty, and the means of almost general bankruptcy. A simple individual to rise to-day worth half a million—an undone man to-morrow! Are these the principles of commerce? Were these the lessons which your worthy father transmitted to you? or which I have inculcated?

Bev. Have mercy, Mr. Fable; consider my situation, and do not seek to aggravate the horrors of it! I who so lately thought myself in the road to prosperity, hoping to retrieve my fortune, and redeem my character, now shortly to be branded as the most faithless of beings, the basest of mankind! Distraction!

Fable. Your situation, I own is dreadful; but by what an unpardonable complication of depravity have you brought it upon yourself, Mr. Beverley!

Not

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 183

Not content with one species of enormity, but industriously multiplying your ruin, and combining in yourself the double vices of a Man of Business, and a Man of Pleasure ! Gambling the whole morning in the Alley, and sitting down at night to *quinze* and hazard at St. James's ; by turns, making yourself a prey to the rooks and sharks at one end of the town, and the bulls and bears at the other ! Formerly, a young spendthrift was contented with one species of prodigality—but it was reserved for you and your precious associates to compound this new medley of folly, this olio of vice and extravagance, at once including the dissoluteness of an abandoned debauchee, the chicanery of a pettyfogger, and the dirty-tricking of a fraudulent stock-jobbing broker.

Bev. Go on ; go on, Sir ! it is less than I merit, and I can endure it with patience. My late humiliation was but the prologue to my total ruin. The most desperate calamity cannot now make me more miserable.

Fable. Oh, Beverley ! did you but know the consolation I had in store for you, the schemes I had formed to make you easy in your circumstances, and happy in your love, you would still more regret this cruel disappointment.

Bev. Happy in my love !—Oh, Lydia, I dare not even think of my presumption in having aspired to your favour !

Fable. Go, young man ! go to those friends on whom you formerly placed such reliance, and try what they will contribute to deliver you from ruin !—Leave me a while—studying to exert my weak endeavours to preserve my friend—or, if they fail, struggling to arm my mind with fortitude and patience.

Bev. Where shall I direct myself ? to whom shall I apply ? My situation, I fear, is hopeless. The inhabitant of a dungeon, under sentence of execution, is in a state of happiness, to what I feel at this moment. [Exit.

Fable alone.

Tho' he appears at this instant so very culpable, I cannot but be touched by his agitation and remorse.—Yet this is not a moment for passion, but reflection.—The ruin, if not prevented, so thoroughly overwhelming ! The time so pressing ! My friend absent ! The property I can command, large and considerable as it is, not to be converted into specie directly !—What can be done ?—Mr. Tropic must return me the money in his hands, which

which I must now prevent his delivering, as well as the supposed letters to Beverley—yet that will be far, very far from sufficient—how to make up the rest then?—There is one way indeed—but is that warrantable? Lydia's trust-money.—Have I a right, on any pretence whatever, to lay my hands but for a moment, on that sacred deposit?—And yet, where would be the injury? I am sure of replacing the sum before there is the least probability of its being demanded: and that resource, in conjunction with others already in my power, would supply every emergency. My absent friend would be rescued from certain ruin, even the transgression of Beverley might be concealed from the world, and Lydia would suffer no wrong, nor even be alarmed by suspicion.—It shall be so. I'll see this broker, and settle the matter immediately.—And yet, my heart recoils at this transaction. The most pious frauds are at least ambiguous; and I feel it as the most cruel necessity to be driven to indirect means, even for the most generous purposes.—But I have entangled myself by one crooked action, and I must endeavour to redeem all by another.

[Exit.

Another

Another apartment in the same house.

Enter Handy and Mrs. Flounce.

Handy. Oh! if this be the case, I shall give warning immediately.

Mrs. Flounce. So shall I, I promise them. Ruined indeed! In my mind it is a monstrous piece of impudence in these trumpery merchant-people to keep gentlefolks for their servants, like people of quality.—Mrs. Golding quotha!—a gentlewoman of my genteel family—as wealthy a rope-maker's daughter as any in the city of Bristol! equal to Mrs. Golding, I hope, at any time.

Handy. Equal, Mrs. Flounce! ay, and a great deal superior. An old worn-out bit of beggar's-tape, that binds the hem of quality!—imitating countesses and duchesses—endeavouring to adapt her vulgar west-country airs to the meridian of St. James's—aping, in her Bristol manner, the airs and graces of persons of fashion—but no more like persons of fashion, than a Bristol stone is to a diamond!

Mrs. Flounce. Well! service, as they say, is no inheritance, Mr. Handy—so I sha'n't go into place again—not I, truly—I have taken a house at
Hogfden,

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 187

Hogsdon, and intend to set up a boarding-school to teach young ladies breeding.

Handy. And you'll have great success, I dare say, Mrs. Flounce.—As to me, my master was to have got me a good place in the India-house; or to have sent me out with the next cargo of judges and generals to Bengal.—But now he's ruined in the Alley, his interest I suppose is all gone—as well as his principal—eh, Mrs. Flounce? But this is always the case, when Lombard-Street will travel to Pall-Mall. Quite another latitude! Is not it, Mrs. Flounce?—But odds! here's somebody coming up stairs—we'll settle this matter in the housekeeper's room. Your hand, my dear!

Mrs. Flounce. And my heart too, Mr. Handy! but I shall pick a quarrel with my lady, and give warning as soon as she comes home.

Handy. To be sure, Mrs. Flounce! There's nothing more to be got in this house. We'll both give warning immediately; and we'll give up the month's wages to the poor devils, out of mere charity. [Exit.

Enter a Servant, followed by Golding.

Gold. Mr. Fable not at home, d'ye say?

Serv. But just gone out, Sir.

Gold.

188 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

Gold. Nor Mr. Beverley?

Serv. No, Sir.

Gold. Nor Mrs. Golding neither?

Serv. My lady has been abroad with two other ladies most part of the morning, but we expect her home very soon, Sir.

Gold. Well—well—as soon as any of them return, let me know.

Serv. I will, Sir.

[*Exit.*

Golding alone.

Very strange all this! I don't understand one word I have heard or read of my friends, or myself, or my affairs, since I landed. Thou art in a maze, friend Golding! But a man who comes home from the Indies, must expect at his return to meet with some new events to surprise him—his house burnt, his daughter eloped, his son engaged in a fray, his wife dead, or some little accident. The principal object of my voyage too has not yet answered, though in other points it has amply succeeded. I long to see Mr. Fable, or Beverley, or my wife—Who have we here?

Enter Tropick.

What is your pleasure, Sir?

Trop.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 189

Trop. To speak with Mr. Beverley. But he is not at home, they say.

Gold. So it seems, Sir.

Trop. Having some very particular business with him, I must beg leave to wait for his return.

Gold. I am concerned in Mr. Beverley's affairs. Pray, Sir, what is your business? You may trust it to me, Sir.

Trop. I have letters of great consequence from abroad to deliver to him, and some more to Mr. Fable.

Gold. From abroad! From what part of the world? and from whom, Sir?

Trop. From India—from my old friend and acquaintance, Mr. Golding.

Gold. Mr. Golding!—So, here's an old friend and acquaintance of mine that I never saw in my life before. [*aside.*—And pray, how is Mr. Golding, Sir?

Trop. Never better, Sir.

Gold. Where is he at present, Sir?

Trop. In India, Sir.

Gold. What part of India?

Trop. Bengal.

Gold. I don't know that ever I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Golding. Pray, what sort of a man is he?

Trop.

Trop. As good a sort of man as breathes, Sir.

Gold. Yes; but his person?

Trop. Oh, as to his person, that is indifferent enough—a little, wizen, withered, whipper-snapper old gentleman, shorter by the head and shoulders than you or I, Sir.—A little merry man though—many a curry have I eat in his company—many a sagar have little Goldy and I smoaked together.

Gold. What! you and little Goldy are particular friends then?

Trop. Very particular; or he hardly would have entrusted me with my present commission, I believe.

Gold. What may that commission be, Sir?

Trop. Nay, I may tell you: and indeed the affair will soon be known by every body.—I am not only commissioned to deliver the letters I mentioned, but charged with a very capital remittance from my friend Golding, consigned to Mr. Fable, in favour of the young gentleman here, Mr. Beverley, for whom I now came to enquire.

Gold. And have you this capital remittance with you at present, Sir?

Trop. Yes, yes; I have my credentials. Here they are! [*clapping his hand to his pocket*] safe and

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 191

and found, I warrant you—and as good as the Bank, Sir.

Gold. And you had this money directly from Mr. Golding, you say?

Trop. From his own hands—from whom else should I have it?

Gold. Nay, how should I know? But it is very well as it is—very well. Be so good then, if you please, Sir, to deliver this very capital sum of money to me, Sir!

Trop. To you? On what account, friend?

Gold. Because, as you say, you had it from me.

Trop. Why, who are you?

Gold. The very person from whose own hands, you confess, you received it—Mr. Golding.

Trop. You Mr. Golding!

Gold. The same.

Trop. No, no—not you indeed—that will never pass, I promise you.

Gold. Not Mr. Golding!—Why, who the devil am I then?

Trop. A damn'd rogue, I believe. Just now you said, you did not know Mr. Golding; and as soon as you heard I had brought a considerable sum of money you are turned into Mr. Golding yourself.—But you may cast your skin again, old serpent. The trick won't take, I assure you.

Gold.

192 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

Gold. Trick!—This is the most impudent piece of knavery!—Trick, indeed! I believe, there is some trick upon me here, if I knew what to make of it—I'll have you taken up for a new kind of forgery; for bringing money upon false pretences—for——

Trop. And you insist upon it, that you are Mr. Golding?

Gold. To be sure, I do. I'll call the whole house to prove the truth of it.

Trop. And Mr. Golding, the true Mr. Golding, is really returned from India then?

Gold. To be sure he is. Can't you see, Sir?

Trop. I have made a fool of myself a second time—that's what I see—but be who you will, Mr. Golding, or not Mr. Golding, I shall not deliver the letters or money to you, old gentleman!—I'll go back again, like a fool as I came—to the old fool that sent me—on such a fool's errand!

[*Exit.*

Golding alone.

What the plague, am I in India still then? or in the moon? and myself and the people about me all lunatics?—Our affairs they say are all in confusion, and yet Beverley is going to be married.—To whom, I wonder!—No matter who—the match I intended will be quite out of the question—

Another

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 193

Another piece of ill fortune!—But I am in the dark all this while—talking of every thing, and acquainted with nothing.—Well! since I can find nobody, and get no intelligence at home, I will seek for it abroad—by delivering my letters, and making enquiries at Mr. Denier's [*going*.]—But stay! here's a woman at last. My wife, I hope.—Hey! how's this? Do I see right? Mrs. Carlton!

Enter Mrs. Carlton.

Of all the women on earth, Mrs. Carlton!

Mrs. Carlt. Mercy on me! what do I see? Can that be Mr. Winterton?

Gold. No.

Mrs. Carlt. Yes; it is he.

Gold. No, no, no, I tell you!

Mrs. Carlt. What! sha'n't I believe my senses? Are not you Mr. Winterton?

Gold. Hush!—I am glad to see you—You know me well enough—but don't call me by that name again for the life of you!

Mrs. Carlt. Why, your name is Winterton— isn't it, Sir?

Gold. Hift! don't bawl so—Come away from that door a little—and not a breath of that name, I charge you.

VOL. II.

O

Mrs.

Mrs. Carlt. Lord, Lord ! what's the matter with you ?—What's the man so much afraid of ?

Gold. What most men are afraid of—my wife,

Mrs. Carlt. Your wife !

Gold. Ay ! Mrs. Golding. Now you are satisfied.

Mrs. Carlt. What, and are you Mr. Golding then, after all, Sir ?

Gold. I believe so. I was Mr. Golding before I went abroad—but I scarce know who I am, or what I am, or where I am, since I came back again.

Mrs. Carlt. So this was the reason then that we, poor souls, could never discover what was become of you, Mr. Winterton—Mr. Golding, I beg your pardon, Sir. But you need not be so terrified—for I left Mrs. Golding on a morning visit, and she is not come in yet.

Gold. In the mean while, let us make the best use of our time then. Where is my daughter ? where is Lydia ?

Mrs. Carlt. I left her with Mrs. Golding. You'll see them both here presently.

Gold. That's well—but we must be cautious—How does she do ?

Mrs. Carlt. As well as can be expected in her situation.

Gold.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 195

Gold. As well as can be expected!—What do you mean?—Her situation!—Not undone, I hope.

Mrs. Carlt. Only over head and ears in love, Sir.

Gold. In love! with whom?

Mrs. Carlt. With the young gentleman of this house—Mr. Beverley.

Gold. Beverley!—Why, he is going to be married.

Mrs. Carlt. So they say, Sir.

Gold. But to whom? do you know?

Mrs. Carlt. To her, Sir.

Gold. To Lydia?

Mrs. Carlt. Yes, to be sure, Sir. Heaven forbid it should have been any body else!—But his affairs are all in confusion, it seems, and there's such a pother between them, that I am half distracted about it.

Gold. And I am quite distracted—distracted with joy, Mrs. Carlton! Heaven be praised!—Come, come! here is one piece of good fortune, however!—Leave young folks to themselves, I say.—What I have been labouring and studying to bring about, have they settled at once. The very thing I could have wished! Half the purpose of my voyage to India, and the meaning of the money lately remitted, for which Mr. Fable is appointed trustee.

Mrs. Carlt. And does Mr. Fable know any thing of her relation to you, Sir?

Gold. Not a syllable—Heaven be praised, not a syllable!—I was not willing to explain the matter, till I saw more likelihood of my scheme's taking place.—And now from what I can judge of his proceedings, it is lucky that I never trusted him. An old fox! a caterpillar! a viper! Beverley's sole trustee and creditor indeed!—a crocodile!

Mrs. Carlt. But was it not a little cruel in you to keep us so long in the dark, Mr. Golding?

Gold. Nay, I have not been so much to blame neither, Mrs. Carlton. My first marriage, with Lydia's mother, when I was an idle young fellow, was a foolish love business—and I knew that my having a daughter abroad would have been an objection to my present wife's relations—so I fairly kept the whole matter a secret.—Lydia's mother dying in child-birth, and my present marriage having taken place during the infancy of Lydia, I directed her to be educated by another name, under which I once visited you and my daughter in India—that's the whole affair!—But not a word more of the name or the business, I charge you!

Mrs. Carlt. Not for the world, Sir, till you think proper to mention it.

Mrs.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 197

Mrs. Gold. [*behind.*] Desire miss Lydia to see the things taken out of the coach, and then to follow me into the drawing-room!

Mrs. Carl. Ha! the ladies are here—here already, I protest, Sir.

Gold. Yes, I hear my wife's voice. I would not have her surprize us together. I might appear somewhat aukward and confused, perhaps. I'll run and give her the meeting—but remember now, not a wry word for your life! Mum, mum, Mrs. Carlton! [*Exit.*]

Mrs. Carlton alone.

You may depend upon me, Sir.—Ah, Mr. Golding, Mr. Golding! there is no trusting to looks, I find. Who would have thought of your passing by a wrong name? Who would have suspected such a grave, demure-looking gentleman?

Enter Mr. and Mrs. Golding.

Mrs. Gold. My dear love! I am transported to see you. This is the most agreeable surprize—I thought the last ships that came in would have brought me nothing but letters—or, perhaps, a pagoda, or a monkey at best. But, my husband!—my dear love!—Oh, my dear, let me introduce a very agreeable, genteel young lady to you!—

198 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

a young lady of fortune and family, I assure you.
—My husband, my dear child! [*Introducing Lydia.*]
My dear, miss Lydia Winterton!

Lydia. Ha! my father! Mr. Winterton!

[*Faints away.*]

Mrs. Gold. She faints away! Take care of the child!

Maids enter, and run to assist Lydia.

Lord! what's the meaning of this?—She cried out, *father!* and called you Mr. Winterton.

Gold. Yes—she did say something about Betterton.

Mrs. Carlt. Ay, the poor child has very weak spirits—Every little thing flutters her.—And Mr. Golding is a little like her papa too, I think—especially about the nose.

Gold. Ay; may be so—may be so—but, my dear, suppose you take her into your chamber, and let her lie down a little to recover her spirits!

Mrs. Gold. Ay; we'll soon bring her to herself again—This way, Molly—keep the eau de luce to her nose.—This is from riding backwards in the coach, I fancy—This way; gently, Molly! gently.

[*Mrs. Gold. and maids lead out Lydia.*]

Manent

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 199

Manent Mrs. Carlton and Golding.

Gold. So, so! here was an escape! Murder will out.

Mrs. Carl. Never fear, never tear, Sir! I'll go in to Lydia directly—let nobody be about her but myself—and as soon as she recovers, I'll teach her her lesson, and give her the right cue, I warrant you.

Gold. Ay, do so, do so, Mrs. Carlton! Take care, I beseech you! For the sake of peace and quietness, keep this matter a secret! I shall never be able to break it to Mrs. Golding—she would think herself injured, cheated, robbed, and undone.—And if she were once to know Lydia was a daughter of mine, she would ring it in my ears as long as I live—a smoaky house, and a scolding wife, you know! I need say no more—It is a kind of hell to inhabit one, and the devil himself would scarce live with the other. *[Exeunt.]*

A C T V.

An apartment in Denier's house.

Denier and Capias.

Denier.

VERY well, very well!—And you have him safe then, Mr. Capias?

Capias. Safe and secure, I warrant you, Sir. I put the writ into sure hands—those that will touch a man, let him be ever so shy. However, they had not much ado in this instance—They planted themselves at the corner, stopt Mr. Golding near his own door, and told him their business; He went with them at once, and is now lodged with my friend Snap in Shire-Lane.

Denier. This comes from early intelligence. No minister, no general, no broker, could turn it to greater advantage.

Capias. But how did you procure it, Sir? You are the first upon the roll—I searched the sheriff's office, and there is nothing else out against Mr. Golding, or any body connected with him.

Denier.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 201

Denier. Beverley, knowing me to be his friend, came to acquaint me with his distress in the Alley. The natural consequences of that adventure are obvious: And all my India concerns, remittances, and money transactions coming through their house, it struck me with a panick; but, by good luck, he was scarce gone before I had notice of Mr. Golding's return by letters from India, brought by the same ship in which he came over. I did not lose a moment. I dare say he had not once entered his doors when the officers met him, and perhaps Beverley himself is not yet apprised of his arrival. Am not I a man of dispatch, Mr. Capias?

Capias. A Cæsar, a Machiavel, Sir! You know all the turnings and windings and narrow back-stairs of the law too. You feel your own way; and are client, counsel, and attorney, all in one, Sir!

Denier. And have you the deed ready, Capias?

Capias. Here it is, Sir, perused, signed, and settled, by old Steady, of Lincoln's Inn—an excellent workman! and if we can prevail on Mr. Golding to execute it, you'll come in for an exclusive lien upon his effects, instead of compounding with the other creditors under a commission of bankruptcy, which I suppose will be taken out in less than these three days.

Denier.

Denier. Ay—and under which they will not pay five shillings in the pound, perhaps—such a tumble!—sign the deed? tell him he must sign it—His mind's unsettled yet, and he'll be easily persuaded—Besides, he'll be glad to serve a particular friend—It can't affect him, you know—the assignees will divide the remainder.—I have been a constant friend to the house—he'll be glad to return the obligation, and I shall fall upon my legs again.

Capias. Let us lose no time; the sooner he executes the better, Sir!

Denier. Come along then! I'll attend you to Mr. Snap's. I have not seen Mr. Golding since his return, and we should visit our friends in their affliction, you know. Come along, Mr. Capias!

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene changes to a room in Snap's house.

Fable and Snap.

Fable. Every thing much to my satisfaction; nothing here to complain of, I assure you, Mr. Snap. I never was more comfortably lodged in my life, never wish for better attendance, or more convenient accommodation.

Snap. We does all in our power to oblige company,

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 203

pany, Sir.—Nobody can do no more, you know—especially such as behaves like gentlemen, like your honour, Sir—for we has them of all sorts.—Within this fortnight, there has been no less than four or five different lodgers in this very apartment.—The room is genteel enough for that matter.—Let me see, who was they?—An ensign in the guards; a poet-man from Paddington; a Scotch actor-man! an old battered lady from Soho; and a very fine young one from the New Buildings at Marybone—that's five—and now we have the honour of your honour to make up the even half-dozen, Sir.

Fable. I hope not to give you much trouble, Mr. Snap.

Snap. No, no; you knows you'll soon be relieved, I dare say, your honour.

Fable. Were my letters all delivered according to the directions?

Snap. Every one, Sir; and the gentlefolks says they will be here presently.—I thinks I hears somebody at the door now.—Shall I shew them up, Sir?

Fable. If you please, Mr. Snap.

Snap. Perhaps, they chuses some refreshment.—I've some fine dry sherry—very good for a whet in the morning.

Enter

Enter Tropick.

Fable. Ha! my friend, I am happy to see you.—
Mr. Snap, good morning to you.

Snap. Gentlemen, your servant.—Shall I send up
a bottle of white wine, or a bowl of punch, Sir?

Fable. Not at present, I thank you, Mr. Snap.—
If any body else enquires for Mr. Golding, be so
good as to shew them up.

Snap. I will, Sir.—Your servant—Gentlemen,
your servant. *[Exit.*

Manent Fable and Tropick.

Fable. This is kind, my friend. You little thought
of my desiring a visit from you at this house, I
believe.

Trop. Look ye, Fable, I don't know what to
make of all this.—I don't understand you.—You
may be an honest man, perhaps.—I hope you are
an honest man; but you look very much like a
rogue at present, I can tell you.—First of all, you
employ me in a damned ridiculous business, in
which I have made a cursed fool of myself—and
that is scarce over, than in comes a note from you
at a sponging-house, desiring me to come there,
but not to ask for you by your own name. What's
the meaning of all this, master Fable?

Fable.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 205

Fable. No harm, I assure you, friend. In regard to the business you mention, I meant to stop your going, if, unluckily, it had not been too late; and as to your not asking for me here by my own name, I desired it, because I am not here in my own right, but as the representative of another person.

Trop. Another person! I understand you less and less. Why, zouns, man, they can't arrest people by proxy.

Fable. No; but they may by mistake; and I have humoured the mistake, in order to serve the real party, and punish the rascally creditor.

Trop. Who is the real party? and who is the creditor?

Fable. The writ was sued out against Mr. Golding, at the suit of Mr. Denier. I had but just settled some affairs very essential to Mr. Golding's interest; and did not know of his return till the moment I had placed him beyond danger. Coming home, however, in the dusk of the evening, the catchpoles lay in wait near the house, touched me on the shoulder, and presented their authority. I readily obeyed; submitting to an arrest in the character of Mr. Golding, and glad of an opportunity of exposing the false professions of a pretended friend to the family.

Trop.

206 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

Trop. Well, this seems right enough;—and yet, some how, I don't like it neither.—I don't love turning and doubling.—I love to go straight forwards, Mr. Fable.

Fable. The best road will wind sometimes, you know. Have a little patience; we shall soon be at the end of our journey.

Enter Snap.

Snap. More company, Sir.—Walk up, gentlemen; walk up, ladies. The stairs is a little dark; but there's no danger.

Enter Golding, Mrs. Golding, Mrs. Carlton, Lydia, and Beverley. *[Exit Snap.]*

Fable. Mr. Golding, I am happy to see you returned.—Ladies, you're welcome.—Beverley, how do you?—Well, Mr. Golding, how do you like my new apartments?

Gold. Like?—I like nothing I have seen or heard of you since my coming from the Indies. Out of doors, I hear you have almost made me a bankrupt; at home, I find you have made me a fool.

Fable. How so, Mr. Golding?

Gold. Have not you made yourself this young gentleman's sole trustee and creditor?

Fable,

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 207

Fable. He has made me so, I confess.

Gold. And did not you persuade him to it by a Canterbury tale of letters from me, losses in India, and the devil knows what,—when you had no more authority to talk of me, than of the pope or the great mogul? Had you any such letters from me? Answer me that, Sir.

Fable. No, I had not.

Gold. I told you so.—And did you ever hear that I had any losses in India?

Fable. Never.

Gold. There again!—Did not I tell you so?—And what the plague did you mean by all those falsehoods and forgeries? Eh, Mr. Fable?

Fable. To serve you, and maintain the credit of the house.

Gold. And a very creditable way our affairs are in, truly! One moment I learn that you are our sole creditor; and the next moment I find that our sole creditor is so much in debt himself, that he is lodged in a sponging-house.

Fable. Very true; even so, Sir.

Trop. Psha! plague of your cool blood! I can't bear it. Why does not the man speak out, and tell the whole story?—Look ye, Mr. Golding; he is a very honest fellow; and all he has done was entirely for your service.

Gold.

Gold. Oh ho, Sir! Are you there, old Smoke-a-pipe? What, my old friend, that eat curries and smoked sagars with me at Bengal!—are you come again?—Where's the money I sent by you?

Trop. There, old Fable; you see what a pretty figure I have made.

Fable. Mr. Golding will soon know you better, and entertain a proper respect for you.

Gold. I am finely entertained by you both. You speak for him, and he vouches for you—and I don't know what to make of either of you. But, to come to a right understanding, be so good as to tell me, Mr. Fable, whether you did not receive a very large remittance from India, in favour of this young lady?

Fable. I did.

Gold. Very well.—You must know then, Sir, that her friends have appointed me joint-trustee, with a power to pay the whole sum into her own hands immediately. She has a present occasion for it, and desires to receive it directly.

Lydia. I do, I do, Sir, in order to apply it for the relief of Mr. Beverley.

Bev. Generous, too generous Lydia! Ruin should not prevail on me to touch a single doit of it.

Gold.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 209

Gold. Please to let us touch it, however, Mr. Fable.

Fable. Impossible.

Gold. Impossible! how so? You received it safe—did not you?

Fable. I do not deny it.

Gold. Where is it then?

Fable. Not in my hands at present; nor can I advance any part of it within this fortnight or three weeks.

Gold. Three weeks!—We can't stay three days, or three hours, Sir.

Bev. My Lydia defrauded too!—Confusion!

Mrs. Carlt. The child's money gone!

Trop. What the plague! can't you produce the money, Fable?

Fable. I cannot indeed, friend.

Trop. Friend! Don't call me your friend—I am not your friend—never will be your friend—never speak to you as long as I live.

Bev. Are these your lessons of morality, Mr. Fable? Have you reproached me for intemperate indulgence of my passions, while you were yourself practising deliberated villainy?

Gold. Ah! he has embezzled the money, as sure as I live—Who's here?—Mr. Denier! Your servant, Sir!

Enter Denier and Capias.

Denier. Your's, Sir. I am sorry, Mr. Golding, to have been reduced to the necessity of taking so disagreeable a step as this may appear to you.

Gold. Disagreeable? not in the least disagreeable; I take it rather kind of you, and I am very glad to see you.

Denier. I am happy to find you consider the matter so fairly. I had rather have avoided it; but being advised that it would essentially promote my interest, and not affect your own, I hope you will excuse it, and indeed rejoice at an opportunity of giving a preference to a friend, instead of involving him with your common acquaintance.

Gold. Hey-day! what now? Have I lost my senses, or every body about me lost theirs? I don't understand a word you say, what you mean, or what you drive at.

Capias. My client refers to the bill of Middlesex, taken out against you, and served on you yesterday evening, under which you were arrested, and are now in Mr. Snap's custody.

Gold. I arrested!—Where is Mr. Snap? Here, house!

Enter Snap.

Snap. Did your honour call, Sir?

Gold. Pray, Mr. Snap, did you arrest me last night?

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 211

night?—Did you serve any writ upon me, Mr. Snap?

Snap. Not I, Sir!—not upon your honour—I arrested Mr. Golding.

Gold. Mr. Golding!—So it seems I am not come to myself again yet then!—You, Mr. Sagar, did you help to serve the writ, friend? [*to Tropick.*]

Denier. 'Sdeath, Mr. Capias, there seems to be some mistake here.

Capias. Truly, there doth appear to have been a wrongful arrest.

Snap. Not at all, Sir.—I knows Mr. Golding well enough—There he stands! [*pointing to Fable.*] I shewed him the writ, and he came along with me at once. Did not you, Sir?

Fable. I did—I submitted to go with you, thinking it might be of service to my friend, and a punishment to his false-hearted creditor.

Trop. This action looks honestly of old Fable, after all—and yet the money—I don't know what to make of him.

Gold. Nor I neither.

Bev. But Denier's treachery! I could not have believed it!

Gold. No, to be sure!—But you shall hear of it, Sir, [*to Denier.*] and to your cost too, I promise

you! I'll sue you for damages, and Mr. Fable shall bring his action for false imprisonment—we'll punish you.

Denier. Indeed! It is time to look about me then—But you had best have let the business sleep—I have my revenge in my own hands, I assure you—I have a little packet here——

Gold. Well! what of that, Sir?

Denier. Nay, nothing—only a little news from Bengal.

Gold. Eh!

Denier. Very interesting to a certain lady, not a hundred miles from this place at present.

[*Looking at Mrs. Golding.*

Mrs. Gold. How! what's this?

Fable. What does he drive at?

Gold. I wish he'd be quiet.

Denier. When you have perused this letter, Mrs. Golding——

Mrs. Gold. Well, Sir!

Denier. You will find, madam——

Gold. Don't believe a word he says!

Mrs. Gold. You won't let me hear what he says.

Denier. Poor gentleman! his fears overcome him, but I'll put him out of his pain in an instant.

This

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 213

This letter, madam, arrived it seems by the same ships with Mr. Golding, and will inform you, madam, that this grave old gentleman has had a connection in India with another lady——

Mrs. Gold. My husband!

Gold. [*Aside.*] Oh, plague! I'm betrayed, blown, and undone!

Denier. That this young lady is no other than his daughter——

Mrs. Gold. Lydia!

Denier. That my correspondent in India, who is his friend, consigned her to my family, knowing our connection and acquaintance with your own—— and that Mr. Golding himself forwarded the late remittance in her favour, meaning to give a colour to an intention he had formed of marrying miss Lydia to Beverley—All these circumstances my correspondent refers to, as things of course in his letter, thinking that Mr. Golding had no objection to my being acquainted with them. Read, read, madam!

[*Gives the letter.*]

Gold. [*Aside.*] Dead and buried! I wish I was at Bengal now, or in the black-hole at Calcutta!

Fable. And so this last confidence, like every other, you have betrayed, Sir. Is this your vindication?

214 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

Denier. No; but my revenge, Sir, extorted from me by great provocation—Before you open an account against me, see that you are able to answer all my demands upon you. Take care of the main chance! As to your action at law, my friend *Capias* here knows I may despise it. If the officer has made a false arrest, let the officer answer it.—I have no concern but to take care of myself, you know; so come along, Mr. *Capias*!

Capias. I attend you, Sir. [*Ex. Denier and Capias.*]

Bev. Fool that I have been! false as my other friends appeared, I still reposed an entire confidence in his fidelity.

Fable. Sordid, execrable, narrow-minded rascal!

Mrs. Gold. Here's baseness and treachery! [*After reading the letter.*] Was ever any thing so scandalous! Concealed children, intrigues in India, and ladies in a corner!

Bev. Well, but, Mrs. Golding—

Mrs. Gold. When he is at home with his family, he is as grave, and dry, and sober as a judge, forthwith! and yet, when he gets abroad, he can be as gay, and as prodigal, as a young nobleman just come to his title and estate.

Fable. He may have been to blame, madam; but—

Mrs.

Mrs. Gold. To blame, Mr. Fable! what! these were his India voyages then! this was his business at Bengal! these were his large remittances truly! squandering his fortune, and what was my right, Mr. Fable, upon kept-madams, Eastern princesses, black-a-moor harlots, and natural children!

Mrs. Carlt. Nay—don't say that, Mrs. Golding! miss Lydia was born in lawful wedlock, I assure you, madam.

Mrs. Gold. What! has he got two wives then?

Mrs. Carlt. No—dear me, madam! miss Lydia's mother was dead and buried before his marriage with you, madam.

Bev. My Lydia's uneasiness is insupportable. Shock her no further, I beseech you, madam!

Mrs. Gold. Do you think I have been well treated, Sir?

Bev. The story is but new to me, madam; but the main particular is Mr. Golding's first marriage, which, I apprehend, has been kept secret merely from the notion of its being disagreeable to your family.

Mrs. Gold. And is this the case, Sir?

Gold. It is, indeed—no further harm, I assure you—I should have mentioned the affair, to be sure—but—

216 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

Enter Snap.

Snap. Here's one muster Check below axes for one muster Fable.

Fable. Oh, desire him to walk up, Sir. Now set your heart at rest about my conduct, friend.

Trop. You must make all matters clear then : For at present I don't half understand you.

Fable. Here comes an interpreter.

Enter Check.

Well, Check, have you settled the business?

Check. I have, Sir. Mr. Beverley's differences are all paid. I have acquittances from the parties, and the whole account is closed, Sir.

Bev. Amazement !

Gold. What, is the money gone that way then ? None of it embezzled ! eh, Check ?

Check. Embezzled ? Heaven bless your honour ! he has made free to borrow the money left in his hands indeed : But then he has applied all that he could command of his own into the bargain. Embezzled indeed ! No, no, Mr. Fable cheats nobody but himself, Sir,

Fable. Every particular, Mr. Golding, I am ready to explain. I shall say nothing in vindication or apology for my conduct. The motives on which I have acted are obvious.

Trop.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. 217

Trop. So they are—so they are, friend!—Give me your hand, old Fable! give me your hand! I see you are an honest fellow at last, and I am not ashamed to acknowledge you.

Gold. And I am much obliged to you! I have enough and more than enough to stand the shock of our affairs, repay you with interest, and establish our credit; for, thank Heaven, I have been employing my time abroad better than my young partner has done at home.

Mrs. Gold. Oh, you have been very finely employed, to be sure!

Fable. Come, come, this should be a day of general happiness; as an instance of your universal good opinion of me, let me have influence enough to make peace between Mr. and Mrs. Golding; and as an earnest of their reconciliation, let them give their joint consent to unite Lydia and Beverley, and ratify their happiness!

Bev. Mrs. Golding!—Sir!

Mrs. Gold. What says her fine papa to it?

Gold. Why, if Lydia—

Mrs. Carl. Heaven bless her, she dotes on him.

Lydia. Yes, I will own, my dear father, that the change in Mr. Beverley has removed the only objection that I could ever make to him; and I
will

218 THE MAN OF BUSINESS.

will not blush to confess that the future happiness of my life depends on him.

Fable. Then every thing is adjusted. I give you joy, my friends.

Trop. And I give you joy too. You have puzzled me confoundedly, I confess—I said you were an honest fellow—I knew you were an honest fellow at bottom—but it was a damned long way to the bottom for all that, old Fable.

Fable. My conduct has been mysterious, I confess, friend—perhaps, in some degree, culpably so—but whenever I puzzled you, be assured I no less embarrassed myself. The least deviation from the straight path is attended with difficulties; and though I have always meant honestly, and thought I acted uprightly, I have had ample reason to experience the convenience and necessity, as well as the beauty, of Truth.

E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by Mrs. BULKLEY.

WHEN plays are o'er, by Epilogue we're able,
Thro' moral strainers, to refine the fable;
Again the field of comedy to glean
From what the author did, or did not mean;
Or, in a gayer mood, on malice bent,
Quite topsy-turvy turn the bard's intent.
Shall we, ye criticks, to-night's play deride?
Or shall we, ladies, take the milder side?
Suppose for once we leave the beaten road,
And try, by turns, the harsh and gentle mode;
A kind of critick country-dance begin;
Right hand and left, cross over, figure in!

The critick first strikes off, condemns each scene,
The tale, the bard, and thus he vents his spleen;
" While books lie open on each mouldy stall,
Bills plaister posts, songs paper ev'ry wall,
At ev'ry corner hungry minds may feed,
Wisdom cries out, and he that runs may read.
On learned alms were playwrights ever fed,
And scraps of poetry their daily bread.

Ev'n

E P I L O G U E.

Ev'n Shakespeare would unthread the novel's maze,
Or build on penny histories his plays.
From paltry ballads Rowe extracted Shore,
Which lay like metal buried in the ore.
To jump at once to bards of later days,
What are the riff-raff of our modern plays?
Their native dullness all in books intrench;
Mere scavengers of Latin, Greek, and French,
Sweep up the learned rubbish, dirt, and dust,
Or from old iron try to file the rust.
Give me the bard whose fiery disposition
Quickens at once, and learns by intuition;
Lifts up his head to think, and, in a minute,
Ideas make a hurly-burly in it;
Struggling for passage, there ferment and bubble,
And thence run over without further trouble;
'Till out comes play or poem, as they feign
Minerva issued from her father's brain!
Be all original! struck out at once;
Who borrows, toils, or labours, is a dunce:
Genius, alas! is at the lowest ebb;
And none, like spiders, spin their own fine web.
What wonder, if with some success they strive
With wax and honey to enrich the hive,
If all within their compass they devour,
And, like the bee, steal sweets from ev'ry flow'r?

Old

E P I L O G U E.

Old books, old plays, old thoughts, will never do:
Originals for me, and something new!"

"New? (cries the lady) Prithee, man, have done!
We know there's nothing new beneath the sun.
Weave, like the spider, from your proper brains,
And take at last a cobweb for your pains!
What is invention? 'Tis not thoughts innate;
Each head at first is but an empty pate.
'Tis but retailing from a wealthy hoard
The thoughts which observation long has stor'd,
Combining images with lucky hit,
Which sense and education first admit;
Who, borrowing little from the common store,
Mends what he takes, and from his own adds more,
He is original; or inspiration
Never fill'd bard of this, or other nation,
And Shakespeare's art is merely imitation. }
For 'tis a truth long prov'd beyond all doubt,
Where nothing's in, there's nothing can come out.

Modes oft may change, and old give way to new.
Or vary betwixt London and Peru;
Yet here, and every where, the general frame
Of nature and of man is still the same:
Huge ruffs and farthingales are out of fashion;
But still the human heart's the seat of passion:
And he may boast his genius stands the test,
Who paints our passions and our humours best.

Censure

EPILOGUE.

Censure not all ; to praise let all aspire ;
For emulation fans the poet's fire.
Put not one grand extinguisher on plays ;
But with kind snuffers gently mend their blaze.

While other licenc'd lotteries prevail,
Our bard, by ticklish lott'ry, tempts a sale,
Prints the particulars of his Musæum,
And boldly calls the publick in to see 'em :
Their calculation must his fate reveal,
Who ventures all in the dramatic wheel !

*On account of the length of this Epilogue, many lines
were omitted at the Theatre.*

M A N

MAN AND WIFE;
OR, THE
SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE.

A
C O M E D Y.

Quid vetat et Nosmet?

*First acted at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden,
on the 7th of October, 1769.*

MADISON WILSON

SHAKESPEARE CLUB

1880

1880

TO
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, KNT.

PRESIDENT
OF THE
ROYAL ACADEMY,

THIS COMEDY
IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS ADMIRER,

FRIEND,

AND MOST FAITHFUL

HUMBLE SERVANT,

GEORGE COLMAN.

VOL. II.

Q

ADVER.

TO
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
ADVERTISEMENT.

THE character of Sally (in which the little actress who performed it discovered more than the dawn of theatrical genius) is an imitation of that of Babet, in the comedy of *La Fausse Agnès*, by Destouches; and there are some traits of the character of Kitcher, in the third volume of the *Connoisseur*.

To these acknowledgments, the author has only to add his most grateful thanks to the publick, for their candid and indulgent reception of this little piece, as well as to the performers, for their great excellence in the representation of it.

PRELUDE.

P R E L U D E.

C H A R A C T E R S.

DAPPERWIT, *Mr. Dyer.*

JENKINS, *Mr. Hull.*

TOWNLY, *Mr. Wroughtons.*

SCENE, Covent-Garden.

Townly crossing the stage. Jenkins calling after him.

Jenkins.

HOLO! Tom!

Townly. Who's there? Jenkins!

Jenk. Ay. Where are you going?

Townly. To the play.

Jenk. The play! what is it? Let me see! [*Looking up at the play-bills.*] MAN and WIFE; or, the SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. So, so! a new comedy! Whose is it?

Townly. Don't you know?

Jenk. Not I: I have been partridge-shooting ever since the first of September; and am but just come to town. Who is the author?

Townly. Your friend and acquaintance, the manager.

Jenk. What! little Dapperwit?

P R E L U D E.

Townly. The same. Here he comes, faith !
Speak to him, Tom ; ask him about his comedy.

Enter Dapperwit.

Jenk. Ha, George ! How do you do ?—Well—
but you need not look so melancholy. What !
in mourning ? Another annuity, I suppose : Ha,
George ?

Dapp. No : I am in mourning, Sir, for a dear
and worthy friend, and a most valuable partner :
A man, whose goodness of heart was even superior
to his admirable talents in his profession.

Townly. Your friend's death was a publick loss,
Sir. He was deservedly a favourite of the publick,
and is very generally regretted.

Jenk. Well, but, George, now you have put on
mourning for your friend, I am afraid you will be
obliged to continue to wear it for Covent-Garden
theatre.

Dapp. I hope not, Sir. The publick is candid
and generous ; and we must be attentive and
industrious.

Jenk. Yes ; you have been dabbling again, I see.

Townly. A stroke at the Jubilee ; ha, Mr. Dap-
perwit ?

Dapp. An innocent laugh, Sir ; raised out of an
adventure,

P R E L U D E.

adventure, which, I have taken the liberty to suppose, happened during that period. As to the Jubilee itself, or the design and conduct of it, I cannot consider them as objects of satire.

Townly. No, Sir? They have been roundly attacked : Lodgings without beds, dinners without victuals——

Dapp. I know what you mean, Sir. My friend Pasquin has infinite humour; but his pleasantries are exceedingly harmless, and I believe he wishes they should be so.—The scandal of others is mere dirt—throw a great deal, and some of it will stick. But the satire of Pasquin is like fuller's-earth—it daubs your coat indeed for a time, but it soon grows dry; and when it rubs off, your coat is so much the cleaner.—Thus it has happened on the present occasion—for, after all, gentlemen, if a building be erected for a particular purpose, is not it natural to pull it down again, when that purpose is answered? A great number of people cannot be assembled without creating a croud—a rainy day will prevent the exhibition of a pageant—and heavy showers destroy the effect of a firework.

Townly. Ay, Sir; but an ode without poetry—

Dapp. As to the ode—it had one capital fault, I must confess.

P R E L U D E.

Townly and Jenk. Well—and what was it?

Dapp. Why, gentlemen, I understood every word of it. Now, an ode, they say—an ode—to be very good, should be wholly unintelligible.

Townly. Oh, your servant, Sir!

Jenk. Well—but you intend to give it us here, I suppose?

Dapp. No—the ode can no where be heard to so much advantage as from the mouth of the author—and indeed it was so happily calculated for the time and place, for which it was originally intended, and the speaker so truly felt a noble enthusiasm on the occasion, that you have lost a very exquisite pleasure (never to be retrieved) by not hearing it at Stratford-upon-Avon.

Townly. Well, Sir—but the pageant and the masquerade—

Dapp. Those you shall see, Sir—and perhaps they may appear to more advantage, and be seen with more satisfaction, at the Theatres Royal, than they could have been at Stratford itself.

Jenk. Well—but, George—tell us a little of your comedy.

Dapp. Walk in, Sir, and it will speak for itself—The curtain is just going to draw up.

Jenk. And how do you feel yourself?—Eh, George?

Dapp.

P R E L U D E.

Dapp. Much as usual on similar occasions—all hurry and flutter—which strangers are apt to mistake for high spirits, and my friends and acquaintance know to be nothing but apprehension.

Townly. We'll give you a hand. I know of a strong party against it, I can tell you, Sir.

Dapp. I fear no party, unless my own dullness raises one against me. The publick will suffer no party, no malice, to interrupt its amusements. If I succeed, I shall owe my success to their indulgence—if I fail, I shall owe it to myself. With these sentiments I enter the theatre. Come, gentlemen—my trial is near coming on, for the play must be just going to begin.

Townly. We attend you, Sir.

Jenk. Well said, little Dapperwit—Have a good heart, my boy! We'll keep it up, I warrant you!

[Exeunt.]

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CROSS,	<i>Mr. Shuter.</i>
MARCOURT,	<i>Mr. Woodward.</i>
KITCHEN,	<i>Mr. Dunstall.</i>
Colonel FRANKLY,	<i>Mr. Perry.</i>
Landlord,	<i>Mr. Morris.</i>
FLEECE,	<i>Mr. R. Smith.</i>
LUKE,	<i>Mr. Lewes.</i>
BUCK,	<i>Mr. Davis.</i>
SNARL,	<i>Mr. Wignell.</i>
Ostler,	<i>Mr. Quick.</i>
Men Passengers,	<i>{ Mr. Herbert,</i>
	<i>{ Mr. Fox,</i>
Mrs. CROSS,	<i>Mrs. Green,</i>
CHARLOTTE,	<i>Mrs. Bulkley.</i>
SALLY,	
LETTICE,	<i>Mrs. Mattocks.</i>
Landlady,	<i>Mrs. Gardner.</i>
Women Passengers,	<i>{ Miss Pearce.</i>
	<i>{ Mrs. Copen.</i>

Waiters, &c.

M A N

MAN AND WIFE;
OR, THE
SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE.

A C T I.

SCENE, an Inn at Stratford upon Avon. Bells ringing—People behind calling Waiter! Waiter! Ostler! House! &c. Waiters answering, Coming! Landlady calling. People cross the stage different ways—Then enter Landlord and Ostler.

Landlord.

I TELL you, Ostler, you must find stabling for the set of horses that came in last.

Ostler. I tell you, Sir, it is impossible: I could not put up the horses if they would give me ten guineas a stall for them.

Landlord. Why can't you put some of them in the corner stable?

Ostler.

Ostler. I can't, Sir. Jack Pratt has taken it all for Whirligig, that's entered to run for the Jubalo cup, you know.

Landlord. Well, well—it does not signify—the gentlemen and ladies are particular acquaintances of the steward—and you must find room for their horses somewhere.

Ostler. I must turn somebody's else's horses to grafs then. [Exit.]

Bells ringing—and people calling again—Waiters answering, Coming!—then enter Luke and three or four other waiters.

Landlord. Here, waiters, answer the bells! I am so lame, I can scarce hobble about, and I want to be in fifty places at once. Luke, you have the care of most part of the house: Why don't you answer the bells? [Landlord hobbles out.]

Luke. Coming, Sir, coming!—Here, Richard, take this bottle of Madeira to the gentleman and lady in the As you like it—Jack, carry a crown bowl of punch into the Measure for Measure—Do you, Thomas, take a dozen more port wine, and pipes and tobacco, to the musick—they drink like fishes—they are in the Tempest—d'ye hear?—and, William, do you make haste with half-a-dozen of
claret

claret to the gentlemen in the Merry Wives—they have been calling and ringing this half-hour.

Buck. [*within.*] Waiter!

Luke. Coming, Sir, coming!

Enter Buck, tipsy. [*singing.*]

Buck. All shall yield to the mulberry tree;

Bend to thee,

Sweet mulberry!

Matchless was he

Who planted thee,

And thou like him immortal shalt be.

Here, you waiter! you scoundrel, you, what's the meaning you don't bring the wine we call'd for? We are obliged to sit up all night because there are no beds, and you won't supply us with liquor to keep us in good humour.

Luke. Beg your honour's pardon—do all in our power to oblige—wait on seven companies myself; and have seven waiters under me, at three and sixpence a-day.

Buck. How the fellow gabbles!—Have not I seen your face before, you Sir?

Luke. Ah—your honour knows me well enough.—I am Luke, Luke, your honour, from the St. Alban's.

Alban's. But in the summer, business being dead in town—all the quality gone, your honour knows—I go too—and wait at all publick places in the country—I came over here from York races—had half-a-dozen waiters under me there too—A little before that, I was at the installation at Cambridge—From hence I go to the Gloucester music-meeting—In October I shall be at Newmarket—And by the meeting of parliament you'll find Luke, honest Luke, your honour—at the St. Alban's again.

Buck. Chatter—chatter—chatter—the fellow huddles his words one upon another—and drives 'em out of his mouth like the liquor out of a narrow-necked bottle—Get us the wine directly, you scoundrel, you.

Luke. Directly, Sir. [*Bell rings.*] Coming, Sir, coming! [*Exit.*]

Enter Snarl, in a night-gown.

Snarl. “And the worst of all beds is a Warwickshire bed.”—*Buck!* what are you up too?

Buck. Up! I have not been in bed; there was none to be got.

Snarl. I wish you had had mine then—I had rather sit up without rest, than lie in bed without it.—I have been swimming in a hammock, with a little

little army walking over me—and as to sleep, one might as well think of it in the Tower of Babel.

Buck. Come along with me then, and we'll teach you how to despise sleep.—There is a set of us have taken the room beyond the musick, for the whole time of the Jubilee—and it serves us for dining-room, parlour, and bed-chamber. Ever since dinner to-day—faith, I believe I may say yesterday, for it is almost day-light again—we have been following the example set us at the amphitheatre, and have been drinking bumpers to the immortal memory of Shakespeare, to the steward of the Jubilee, with a round of Shakespeare toasts—Here, old Snarl! here's a Jubilee-favour! see here! [*shewing his cockade.*] So, come along with me, my boy, and I'll introduce you to the jolliest company at Stratford upon Avon—for

All shall yield to the mulberry tree, &c.

[*Exit singing, with Snarl.*]

Bar-bell ringing. Landlady (when the bell ceases) calling, Why, Chambermaid! John Ostler! Boots! Chamberlain! Where are you all?

Then enter Landlady, followed by Colonel Frankly and five other Passengers in the Birmingham coach.

Landlady. This way! this way, if you please, ladies and gentlemen!—Why, Chambermaid!
Richard!

Richard! Thomas! Boots, I say!—[*Enter Chambermaid and two or three Waiters.*] Here is the Birmingham coach has been overturned this morning—the gentry frightened out of their wits—and nobody to shew them a room, or get them any refreshment—D’ye chuse coffee or tea, some hot wine and egg, a little warm punch, or a white negro, ladies and gentlemen?

1st Man Pass. This is flying, as they say—flying to town in one day, as they call it.—Hoisted into the coach at ten o’clock at night, and stuck together as close as dried figs—Here, in spite of fatigue, we fall asleep before midnight, and soon after wake with a damned crash, and find ourselves canted into a slough, by way of a feather-bed—Damn their flying, I say—a tight ship with plenty of sea-room is worth forty on’t.

Wom. Pass. I am sure it is a shame, so it is, to stuff the coach in the manner they do—six inside passengers, two children in lap—three upon the box—four upon the top of the coach, and half a dozen in the basket—besides hardware parcels and haunches of venison in the boot and the coach seats. Such a load! no wonder the machine should break down or turn over.

Another Wom. Pass. Mercy on me! I am in such a pickle, I am ashamed to be seen—and then I shall

shall never recover my fright. Pray, ma'am, could you get me a little hartshorn and water?

Landlady. D'ye hear, Chambermaid? why don't you stir?—Some hartshorn and water for the gentlewoman—fly, I say!

2d Man Pass. Get me some mulled wine, and a dry toast, d'ye hear, you, Sir?—Zounds, how this house is altered! It used to be one of the best inns upon the road—but now there's hardly getting any body to come near one—no attendance—no accommodation!

Landlady. I hopes the gentry will excuse all faults at present—We never were so full in our days—we're almost hurried out of our lives—every house in the town just the same—all as busy as bees about the Jubalo.

2d Man Pass. Jubalo! I have heard of nothing but Jubilees, and Shakespeares, and mulberry-trees, for these three months. What the devil is this Jubilee?

Landlady. Lack-a-day, Sir, I can hardly tell you myself; but it is one of the finest things that ever was seen—There is the great little gentleman from London, and I don't know how many painters, and carpenters, and musicianers, and actor-people, come down on purpose—Great doings, I promise you.

1st Wom.

1st Wom. Pass. Is there to be any dancing, pray?

Landlady. Oh, yes—abundance of dancing—but begun with going to church, and singing of *an-tims* and *o-ra-to-ries*, I think they call them—and then there is eating and drinking, and processioning, and masquerading, and horse-racing, and fireworks—So gay—and as merry as the day is long.

1st Man Pass. And the night too, I warrant you, landlady.

Landlady. Oh, ay; a ball and entertainment, every night, your honour.

[*During this scene, coffee, tea, &c. handed round to the passengers.*]

Enter Stage-Coachman.

Coachman. The horses are put to, gentlefolks.

2d Man Pass. By and by—we are coming, master Whip!

Coachman. Please to make a little haste, my master!—this accident has thrown us quite out of our bias, as I may say—we shall be two hours beyond our time before we get to Woodstock to-day—The fly from London will wonder what is become on us.

1st Man Pass. No, no; they'll think we have broke our necks, or they have broken their own necks, mayhap.

Coachman.

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 241

Coachman. Ah, heaven bless your honour!—you're a merry gentleman.

1st Man Pass. How many knots d'ye go an hour, brother seaman?

Coachman. We goes above seven miles an hour—near seven and a half—up hill and down, my master.

1st Man Pass. Well—you must let out a reef or two this morning, to make up for lost time—but don't overset the ship again.—But, come—I am purser to the ship's company—what's to pay, mother?

Landlady. Coffee—tea—wine—and bread and butter—five and four-pence, Sir.

1st Man Pass. There—there's six shillings.—Good b'wye, mother—I wish you a merry Jubalo!

[*Exit Coachman, with Passengers.*]

Landlady. Kindly welcome, Sir! welcome, ladies! kindly welcome!—[*Bell rings.*] Richard! answer to the Magpye! [*Another bell rings.*] Thomas! run up to the Moon!—Chamberlain! [*Exit bawling.*]

[*Colonel Frankly left sitting at table—Re-enter Coachman.*]

Coachman. The passengers are all in, my master!

Frankly. A good journey to them!—I shall go

no further with them.—Here's for yourself, honesty!

Coachman. Thank you kindly—heaven blefs you, master!

[*Exit.*

Colonel Frankly alone.

So!—Spite of accidents, I have reached the scene of action, however.—Charlotte, I reckon, arrived yesterday.—Her father and mother both endeavouring to counteract each other, and she to baffle both.—If our plan of operations does but succeed, I shall honour the name of Shakespeare more than ever—for to us this celebrity will prove most truly a Jubilee.—But who comes here? As I live, that puppy Marcourt.—The enemy, I see, is in motion—but the coxcomb little thinks I am his rival—and, what is whimsical enough, always chuses to make me his confidant—tho' I suppose he tells me no more than he tells every body else.

Enter Marcourt.

Marc. La Fleur! take the baggage off the chaise, and come to me immediately.—My dear Frankly! who would have thought of finding you here? What brought you to Stratford upon Avon?

Frankly. The Birmingham stage-coach.

Marc. Oh, ridiculous! And what could cram you into a stage-coach?

Frankly.

Frankly. An accident—and another accident had like to have thrown me out of it again.—I have been on a recruiting party in Staffordshire:—Losing a wheel of my post-chaise, about six miles off, I was glad to get into the stage, which I had scarce well done when it was overturned. My fellow-travellers are but just set forward for London.

Marc. Yes—I met the plebeians just as I drove into the yard.—I have been on the road all night myself, egad. I rattled through Oxford at midnight, loud enough to rouse all the sleepy fellows of colleges—and am just arrived here, where, I find, nobody can get a bed to sleep in.

Frankly. And what hurried you so?

Marc. Why, you must know I should have been here last night, at furthest—but having promised to dine at the Macaroni yesterday with Rochester, Brumpton, and Evergreen—

Frankly. The noblemen of those titles, d'ye mean?

Marc. Yes, to be sure—but you never mention titles—titles of people you live with. 'Tis not the *ton*. When you say plain *Townly*, *Lovelace*, *Ogleby*, and so forth, people who live in the world mean the Duke, Marquis, or Lord of the name;

R 2

but

but when we say Jack Wilson, George Belford, Ned Thompson—and so on—we mean a commoner. We speak of peers as peers subscribe themselves in writing—no christian name—and nothing of the title except the place from which it is taken.

Frankly. I beg your pardon. Proceed.

Marc. Why then, being engaged to dine with them, I say, I did not set out from Pall-Mall till between eight and nine o'clock.—I lost six hundred before the chaise came to the door.

Frankly. Deep play!

Marc. Pho! nothing at all. Lovelace lost four and thirty hundred to Jack Airy of the guards, at the same sitting. We used to set ten or twenty, perhaps, sometime ago—but now, they never make up a *rouleau* of less than fifty guineas.—La Fleur! [*calling*] Where is this fellow? I must get off my boots.

Frankly. Did you ride any part of the way?

Marc. What, in the dark, and on the road?—Oh, no!—Indeed I hardly ever ride now, but in the spring, through the three parks; or to pay visits.

Frankly. Visits on horseback?

Marc. Why not? We all visit on horseback since the new pavement—and I'm very often out the whole morning without going off the stones.—

Take

Take horse at Hall's stables, a short bait at Arthur's—a slice of pine-apple, and half-a-dozen of scandal and politicks at Betty's—and so make the tour of the parish of St. James's, through the square, Pall-Mall, Piccadilly—and Hall's stables again.—But, La Fleur! Where the deuce is this fellow? I sha'n't have my hair dress'd these three hours.

Frankly. Not these six hours, if one may judge by the quantity.—Is not so much hair behind troublesome?

Marc. Not at all—So far from it, that above half of it is false—for in an undress, unless you have a club as thick as both your doubled-fists, you are not fit to be seen—but with that, a little French hat cut to the quick, that leaves your face as broad as Harry the Eighth's, an ell of shirt-sleeves hanging over a short half-inch pair of ruffles, a coat powdered half way down your back, a tambour waistcoat, white linen breeches, and a taper switch in your hand, your figure, Frankly, must be irresistible.

Frankly. Your figure you mean, Marcourt.—But what could prevail on you to exhibit it at Stratford? Do you intend to make one in the pageant, and shew yourself as one of the characters of Shakespeare?

R 3

Marc.

Marc. No, faith; such an original did not exist in his days; and the writers of our time have left off drawing other peoples' characters for the sake of exposing their own.

Frankly. Well—but your business here, Marcourt?

Marc. Business of consequence, I can tell you, Frankly. One must have a wife, you know, if it is only for the pleasure of getting rid of her.

Frankly. Oh, I conceive you! A matrimonial affair.

Marc. Yes—the old affair with Charlotte.—We have now brought matters to a crisis. Old Crofs and his wife—the father and mother, you know—are always quarreling;—no wonder, therefore, they squabble about the choice of a husband for their daughter.—The mother, who is a kind of a cousin of mine, and is desirous of bringing the girl into the world, has pitched upon me.

Frankly. A wise lady!

Marc. Yes—but the tramontane father——

Frankly. Has chosen some other man, I warrant you.

Marc. He has—but who now, of all mankind, d'ye think is, in his idea, a proper husband for his daughter? That horrid fellow Kitchen.

Frankly,

Frankly. Kitchen ! what, the famous *bon vivant* ?

Marc. The same—a fellow that has not an idea beyond a haunch of venison. Kitchen and old Crofs are of a club ; and when Mrs. Crofs and he have been wrangling, Kitchen, who is reckoned a joker at the club, puts him into humour again.

Frankly. But he has some real pleafantry, they fay.

Marc. Not he—dull, dull as colonel Grin, who has got Joe Miller by heart, and is always teasing you with a story.—No *flash* in the world—His converfation is all table-talk, made up of eating and drinking. He is a mere walking larder. His mind is a great pantry, from which he is always ferving up fome choice difhes for the entertainment of his friends and acquaintance.

Frankly. But has not he been able to render himfelf a formidable rival ?

Marc. Formidable ! ridiculous—no, no—the father is his friend indeed,—but the mother knows reafon—and then the girl is fo fond—poor thing ! ſhe doats on me to diftraction—pretends to join in old Crofs’s defigns in favour of Kitchen, but holds a privy council with the mother and me, and turns every motion to my advantage.—Now, this it is, Frankly, that brings me poſt to Stratford.—The

father, you must know—but mum! here comes Kitchen himself—I knew we should meet—but I am prepared for him.—I shall snap the delicious morsel out of his mouth, I promise him.

Enter Kitchen and Landlord.

Kitchen. What! the gout?—hands and feet, honest Landlord? Your wine is not found, I am afraid.

Landlord. As any in England, Sir.

Kitchen. Well—let me have some refreshment then—I have met with nothing good upon the road, since the rolls and trout at Uxbridge. Every where else, plague take them, they gave me nothing but cow beef, ram mutton, red veal, stale eggs, and white bacon.

Landlord. You will find the best of every thing here, Sir.—We never hear any complaints—and at present we have made large provisions on account of the Jubilee.

Kitchen. So you had need, Landlord; for you seem to have an army to eat them up.

Marc. Prithee, Landlord, what is this Jubilee?—Mr. Kitchen, your humble servant.

Kitchen. Your servant, Sir. [*Distant civility on both sides—conceitedly on the part of Marcourt, and rough on that of Kitchen.*]

Landlord.

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 249

Landlord. The Jubilee, Sir, is on account of our famous townsman, Shakespeare—the great playwright, that wrote King Lear and his three daughters, and Othello Moor of Venice. They say he loved venison—and, Heaven bless him! he has set many a haunch going in our house—the town is brim-full of company.

Marc. If it is a Jubilee, it must be nonsensical.—I was at the Jubilee at Rome some years ago.

Landlord. Oh, this is quite another thing, I believe, Sir. There is no popery in our Jubilee, though it began with going to church, they say.

Kitchen. I never knew any of our travelled fine gentlemen that did not draw comparisons between things totally opposite. Between antient Rome and this country, there might be some resemblance; but modern Italy is no more to be compared to Old England, than a sirloin of beef to a spoonful of macaroni.

Marc. How should a man talk of things abroad, who has past his whole life at home? You will allow us, Mr. Kitchen, to be more competent judges, who have travelled, and skimmed the cream of Europe.

Kitchen. I can travel to more advantage than most of you, without stirring out of my elbow-chair.—I can digest what I read, and chew the cud

cud of reflection upon it.—As for you fine gentlemen, you skim the cream of Europe, as you say, and bring home nothing but froth, and whipt-fillabub.

Marc. Well said, John Bull!—You like Shakespeare now, I warrant you?

Kitchen. Like him? I adore him! No man of sense, and true taste can do otherwise.

Marc. Ay, I thought so. You prefer his puns and quibbles to the wit and humour of Moliere, I suppose.

Kitchen. No, Sir.—Bigotry is not the growth of this country, in literature any more than religion. Puns and quibbles were the vicious taste of the times; and if they made their way into the pulpit, no wonder that they were to be met with on the stage. I hate a forced chase of puns and little conceits, as much as you can do.—Sheer wit is like sheer wine—but a pun or a quibble—rot it—a pun is nothing but gingling the glasses.

Marc. Oh! they are not the only faults of his barbarous farces—as uncouth a medley to present to this age as a pageant or a puppet-show.—No foreigner can endure him.

Kitchen. They can't taste him, because they don't understand him.

Marc. They can understand him well enough
to

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 251

to be shocked at his absurdities. A baby in the first act become a grown person in the last—plays made out of halfpenny ballads—ghosts and grave-diggers, witches and hobgoblins! Brutus and Cassius conversing like a couple of English common-councilmen—Hamlet killing a rat—and Othello raving about an old pocket-handkerchief.—There's your Shakespeare for you!

Kitchen. Now I should have been sure you had travelled, if I had not known it before. This is a mere hash of foreign criticism, as false as superficial, and made up of envy and ignorance.—Shakespeare, Mr. Marcourt—Shakespeare is the turtle of literature. The lean of him may perhaps be worse than the lean of any other meat;—but there is a deal of green fat, which is the most delicious stuff in the world.

Frankly. Indeed, Marcourt, I think the gentleman is too hard for you.

Kitchen. A crust for the criticks! that's all.

Marc. Never mind it. I shall be too hard for him presently.

Kitchen. I understand you—but I don't believe it. Charlotte has no taste for foreign cookery.

Marc. Then she has less taste than I imagine—The family are now at Stratford.—Where do they lodge, Landlord?

Landlord.

Landlord. Whom does your honour mean?

Marc. Mr. Cross and his family.

Landlord. They have taken a whole house near the new hall, Sir.

Marc. I'll tell you what, Mr. Kitchen—I'll give you a hundred pounds to receive a thousand on my marriage with Charlotte.

Kitchen. With all my heart; and I'll lay you a hoghead of claret you never marry her at all.

Marc. Done.

Kitchen. And done again.—And if you have a mind for any other bet, this gentleman shall hold the stakes.

Frankly. Have a care I don't run away with them!

Kitchen. Never fear!

Marc. Come then!—first to dress, and then for the Signora!

Kitchen. And I say, first for a little refreshment.—Ceres and Bacchus are the warmest friends of Venus.—I never found that love took away my stomach.
[*Exeunt severally.*]

A C T

A C T II.

SCENE, *an apartment in Crofs's house—Mr. and Mrs. Crofs at breakfast. They sit silent some time.*

Crofs.

WELL! am I to have another dish of tea or no, Mrs. Crofs?

Mrs. Crofs. Lord, Mr. Crofs! I wonder you did not find fault that I had not poured out the second dish before you drank the first!

Crofs. Pshaw! [*throwing a slice of bread and butter on the plate.*]

Mrs. Crofs. What's the matter now, Mr. Crofs?

Crofs. Matter!—the bread's bad—the butter's rank—and the tea as coarse as chopt hay.—It's a strange thing one can never have a comfortable breakfast!

Mrs. Crofs. There is no such thing as comfort, wherever you are. The bread is as good bread as ever was tasted—the butter's as sweet as a violet—and the tea is the best sixteen-shilling green in the world; but in town it's just the same thing—you do nothing but find fault there too—though
I have

I have my sugar from Fenchurch-street—my tea from the Grafshopper—and the best Epping-butter from the corner of Savile-row.

Crofs. Ay; you have your particular place for every thing—Not because it's better, but because it's the fashion. You would sooner give a crown a yard more for a silk than buy it any where but on Ludgate-Hill—But I am never in the right in any thing—I dare say now you will insist upon it, that this room is not damp—though I can swear it was not dry when I came down this morning—I shall catch my death of cold, I suppose.

Mrs. Crofs. Lord!—you're so delicate—You may think yourself very well off to have a good house over your head, when so many people are glad to lie in a hayloft, and to lodge their servants in landaus and post-chaises.

Crofs. Well, it's no matter—I deserve it—what the plague had I to do at Stratford?—Such a ridiculous journey! I wonder how I could be such a blockhead as to give into it—And as for yourself too, you care no more for Shakespeare, than I for the pope of Rome.

Mrs. Crofs. And what does that signify, as to going to the Jubilee? Are not all the people of condition round the country to be here? Shakespeare

is

is nothing to the purpose; I would not see the finest play the man ever wrote but in a side-box—And one only goes into the side-box, because it's going into the best company.

Crofs. Yes, that's reason enough for you to do any thing—Because a countess, who has a range of rooms as long as Pall-Mall, gets the whole town together at her route—You must have a route too, and squeeze all your acquaintance into two closets and a cupboard—Nay, last winter, when the town ran masquerade-mad, you got a ridiculous party of about eighteen or twenty fops and flirts, to make fools of themselves, and called it a masquerade.

Mrs. Crofs. I am sure every body admired the stile of the illumination—and then neither Negri nor Robinson ever set out a more elegant side-board—Lady Frankair called it Mrs. Cornelys' in miniature—But you have no notion of any thing that's genteel—You are not fit to live among the world.

Crofs. The world! zounds, madam, does your map of the world comprehend only two parishes?—The inhabitants of which laugh at all the rest for aping them!—Don't you see that this narrow circle that you call *the world*, despise all you that are out of it, and want to force your way into it?

it? Are not they perpetually running away from you? And are not they carrying London to Hampstead and Highgate, on purpose to get rid of you?

Mrs. Crofs. This is all mere scandal and malice—It is very well known that I see none but the first people—And if you had not affronted Sir Peter Levee, he would have engaged to make Charlotte a maid of honour.

Crofs. And I'll make her what most maids of honour would wish to be—The wife of a man of good sense, with a handsome fortune.

Mrs. Crofs. Not of Mr. Kitchen, I hope.

Crofs. And why not Mr. Kitchen, madam?

Mrs. Crofs. He had better marry his cook-maid—a wretch!—He never mixes with a person of fashion, except by chance at Bath, where he goes to recover his digestion after having over-eat himself.

Crofs. And that flimsy piece of quality-binding, Marcourt, is always running after a title, like a child after a butterfly—He is a mere lord-hunter, and loses all the little sense and money he has in the pursuit.

Mrs. Crofs. Nobody despises good company, but those that have not accomplishments to qualify themselves to get into it. Mr. Marcourt sees every body—

body—subscribes to Almack's, and (the first vacant borough) my lord Neverout will bring him into parliament.

Crofs. With all my heart; so as the puppy does not put himself up as a candidate for my daughter.

Mrs. Crofs. I am sure, if ever she has any thing to say to that Mr. Kitchen, she deserves to be confined for a mad woman.

Crofs. There are a great many mad women, that are not confined at all.

Mrs. Crofs. And there is such a thing as a melancholy mad man, who is of all others, the most miserable in himself, and the most shocking to other people.

Crofs. Don't provoke me, Mrs. Crofs! don't provoke me! You know I can't bear it.

Mrs. Crofs. What's the matter with the man? Have I said a single thing to give you the least provocation? I won't speak another word.

[They sit silent a little while.]

Crofs. A puppy! *[muttering.]*

Mrs. Crofs. Ti tum dum! *[humming.]*

Crofs. A coxcombical fellow that— *[muttering.]*

Mrs. Crofs. Li tum ti—— *[humming.]*

Crofs. A provoking woman!

Mrs. Crofs. Tum ti tum tee—— *[humming.]*

Crofs. Zounds! there's no bearing this usage—

I have a good mind to order the chaise, and set out for London immediately.

Mrs. Crofs. Lord, Mr. Crofs, why do you put yourself so much out of temper? am not I as quiet as a lamb?

Crofs. You know—you know, Mrs. Crofs, that this cool inselence is ten times more provoking than passion—But I'll say no more to you—I am a fool to mind your nonsense. [*takes a paper and reads.*]

Mrs. Crofs. [*after a little while.*] Will you have any more tea, Mr. Crofs?

Crofs. No. [*without looking off the paper.*]

Mrs. Crofs. Shall I send away the things?

Crofs. Pshaw! [*turns round in his chair.*]

Mrs. Crofs. John! [*Servant enters.*] take away the tea-things!

Crofs. Let them alone!

Mrs. Crofs. Why, have not you done breakfast, Mr. Crofs?

Crofs. No.

Servant. Mr. Kitchen, Sir, is just come to wait on you.

Mrs. Crofs. Pho!

Crofs. Mr. Kitchen! Shew him up immediately!
[*Exit Servant—Mrs. Crofs following.*] Stay, madam! I insist upon your not leaving the room.

Mrs.

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 259

Mrs. Crofs. What should I stay for? I have nothing to say to him.

Crofs. I don't care—I won't have him affronted.

[*Mrs. Crofs throws herself into a chair.*]

Enter Kitchen.

Crofs. My dear friend!

Kitchen. Sir, I am heartily glad to see you—
Madam, your most humble servant!

[*to Mrs. Crofs.*]

Mrs. Crofs. Your servant, Sir. [Pouting.]

Crofs. Well—but where's your servant and your portmanteau?

Kitchen. At the White Lion.

Crofs. Oh, you must order them here—you must be with us during the Jubilee; we have a very good room for you.

Re-enter Servant.

Servant. Mr. Marcourt, madam, is come to wait on you.

Mrs. Crofs. Oh, I am glad of it—shew him into my dressing-room; I'll wait on him there—
Mr. Kitchen, your humble servant. [*Exit hastily.*]

Kitchen. Your servant, madam.

Crofs. Harkye, John!

S 2

Servant.

Servant. [*Returning.*] Sir!

Cross. Tell my daughter Charlotte to come here.

Servant. Yes, Sir.

[*Exit.*]

Kitchen. Well, Sir, I have obeyed your orders, you see.—I have crossed the country from the West of England, on purpose to attend you.—Colonel Cramwell, Lord Pepper, and two or three more of us, have been on a coasting party.—It has been a delightful summer; and I think I never knew the whittings, turbot, brills, red mullets, and John Dories, in higher perfection.

Cross. I am most heartily glad to see you, Mr. Kitchen; and this meeting will, I think, be decisive.—Our schemes are now ripe for execution. I have humoured my wife in this ridiculous journey, merely because it gave me a better opportunity of thwarting her in the grand point of Charlotte's marriage.—This house, you must know, has been taken in our name for this month, under the pretence of attending this Jubilee—but *really* in order to make the family parishioners—by which means the banns have been asked, as the law requires, between you and Charlotte—and the minister is prepared to perform the ceremony this very morning.

Kitchen. But is Miss Charlotte prepared for it?

Cross

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 261

Cross. Perfectly—Charlotte is a shrewd clever girl; and tho' she carries it fair with her mother, will do every thing that I bid her, and is wholly in your interest.—Oh, here she is!

Enter Charlotte.

Come hither, Charlotte! I have once more the pleasure of presenting Mr. Kitchen to you, and by and by I hope you will receive him as my son-in-law.

Charl. Don't you think, Sir, I have a hard task of it between you and my mama? Your commands are as opposite as North and South, and yet you both expect to be obeyed.

Cross. Never tell me—I am master of the family—it is her duty to honour and obey; and I am resolved to be absolute.

Charl. Ah, my dear papa! your insisting so eternally upon your right, is the very thing that renders it so difficult to maintain it. All women love power; and the best way of securing their obedience, is to tell them that they govern you.

Cross. Did not I say, she was a shrewd girl, Mr. Kitchen?

Kitchen. The young lady is perfectly in the right. A wife is like a trout; she must be tickled, Mr. Cross.

Cross. Well—but have you prepared matters? How do you propose to manage it?

Charl. Just as I have managed every thing else: while my mama supposes I approve of *her* choice, she has no suspicion of my favouring your own—but what d'ye think she would say, if I was to tell her that Mr. Marcourt was my aversion?—I have never dropt a single word to her in behalf of Mr. Kitchen.

Cross. Well, well—that may be right enough, perhaps.—But no wonder that Marcourt's your aversion. He's one of the most empty, feather-headed coxcombs in town.

Kitchen. An insipid fellow, madam!—neither pepper nor salt in him.

Cross. True. My daughter has not the least relish for him.—But, Charlotte! won't it be difficult to carry on this affair in the midst of so much company?

Charl. Oh no! the more the merrier, Sir.

Kitchen. But the fewer the better chear, madam.

Charl. Not in this instance, Sir. This Jubilee is a fortunate circumstance. One is never so private as in a croud, you know.

Kitchen. Why, that's true. Intrigues carried on in the face of the world are always least liable to detection

detection—and now-a-days most people seem to act upon that principle.

Charl. A truce with your satire, Sir; for we are not to act barefaced, I assure you: and the Jubilee concluding with a masquerade affords us an admirable opportunity—Do you—Lord, I'm a mad girl—I was going to make an assignation with you before my father's face.

Crofs. Do! do—I insist on it:

Charl. Why then, I shall slip on my dress, which is a blue Turkish habit, directly after dinner, and in that I shall expect you about seven o'clock.

Kitchen. I am a Turk, if I do not attend you.

Charl. Take care I don't find you a bashaw.

Kitchen. A downright English husband, I promise you.—No water-drinking religion for me, madam; I shall break the laws of Mahomet this very evening, and toast your health in a bumper of the most generous wine to be found in the town of Stratford.

Crofs. Temperance! temperance 'till after to-morrow, I beseech you, Mr. Kitchen! After that, you may drink up the Avon.

Kitchen. I would not give a guinea a ton for it—Shakespeare upon the banks, and the perch out of the stream, are all I want of it.

Crofs. But come—we must bid Charlotte good-morrow—I'll attend you to the inn, and order your servant and baggage up hither.

Charl. What will mama say to that?

Crofs. I don't care what she says; I will have it so.

Charl. How! relapsing already, papa? Mama must not be made uneasy, for many reasons—so don't be angry or jealous if I take very little notice of you to-day, Mr. Kitchen.

Kitchen. No! but, to-morrow morning—ay, and to-morrow evening—Oh, that the doctor had but said grace! The very thought creates an appetite.

[*Exeunt Crofs and Kitchen.*]

Charlotte alone.

Charl. I don't know a young lady with more business upon her hands than myself. My father and his friend to treat with on one hand, my mother and her dainty quater-cousin to negotiate with on the other—and all the while, like a true minister, to attend to nothing but my own separate interest! It puts me in mind of some of the road-posts I saw upon our journey, pointing three ways at once.

Lett. [*Peeping in.*] Is the coast clear?

Charl.

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 265

Charl. I am all alone. What's the matter, Lettice?

Lett. Only a letter from Colonel Frankly.

Charl. He is arrived, I hope.

Lett. Safe arrived, madam. He is at the White Lion.

Charl. But where is the letter!

Lett. Bless me! I have not lost it sure—oh, no! here it is, ma'am!—*[gives the letter, which Charlotte reads while Lettice is talking.]* Ah, you may take your leave of love-letters now. Marriage makes a wonderful alteration in stile and sentiment.—The letters of married people are like your papa's and mama's conversation.

Charl. Well—I hope nobody saw it delivered to you?

Lett. Nobody but your sister Sally. Ah, she's a fly little urchin! tho' she is but a few years younger than you, she has cut all her eye-teeth, I assure you, madam. She asked me, if that was not colonel Frankly's livery—and then she looked as cunning and roguish—she knows what's what, I promise you, madam.—Here the little romp comes.

Enter

Enter Sally, running.

Sally. Oh sister, sister! I am come to give you joy, sister.

Charl. Joy! of what, my dear?

Sally. Colonel Frankly is arrived, sister!

Charl. Well! and what's that to me? why should you wish me joy upon that account?

Sally. Oh, I know why well enough—I am no more a fool than my elder sister.

Charl. What does the child mean?

Sally. Child indeed! you were no simpleton at my age, I warrant you, sister.

Charl. And what then?

Sally. Come, come! I see you are afraid of me—but you need not, I promise you—and I shall have ten times more pleasure in helping you out, than I could possibly have in telling papa and mama.

Lett. Ah! you're a rare one! you'll make a fine young lady one of these days, I warrant you.

Sally. You trust Lettice here, I know well enough; and you had better trust me too, I can tell you, sister. Nay, supposing I could do you no good, it is in my power to do you a great deal of mischief.

Charl. What! do you threaten me, then?

Sally. No, indeed and indeed, I don't, sister. If
I knew

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 267

I knew all your secrets, I would not hurt you for the world.

Lett. And will you be a good little girl now—and tell nobody—and do every thing we bid you?

Sally. That I will—Tell me all, and if I tell papa or mama, or any body else, I wish I may die, sister!

Lett. E'en tell her, ma'am! She loves a little roguery to her heart—and then she is such an arch little soul, I think she may be of use—I have cut out some business for her already.

Sally. I am glad of it—For goodness-sake, let me know it—I'll play my part as well as any of you.

Lett. Ay, I'll be bound for you.

Sally. Well—Colonel Frankly is a charming man, to be sure—and as my elder sister has a colonel, I think I have a right to a captain.

Charl. Hush, my dear; you will be overheard by the family.

Sally. No, I sha'n't—Papa is just gone out with Mr. Kitchen, and mama is in her dressing-room with Mr. Marcourt. She desires to see you there as soon as the procession is over.

Charl. I know her business, and can scarce bear the thoughts of it. How disagreeable it is to live in a state of perpetual dissimulation with both my parents!

Lett.

Lett. Never mind it, ma'am! never mind it!—It is entirely their own faults. They have each of them encouraged and advised you to practise deceit; and neither of them can blame you for following their instructions.

Charl. Ah, Lettice, it is a poor apology for our faults, to excuse them by those of other people.

Lett. Their conduct is an excuse for every thing.—They advise you to dissemble to bring their schemes to bear—and you take their advice in order to compass you own.

Sally. But come, Lettice—Why don't you tell me what I am to do? I long to be busy.

Lett. We may be interrupted here. Come into your sister's room—You must tell a little fib or two.

Sally. Oh, let me alone! I shall not be at a loss for that, I warrant you.—Lord, how grave you look, sister!

Charl. My dear, don't you think I have some reason?

Sally. Reason! no indeed—Are not you going to be married?—Well, you eldest daughters have a fine time of it, to take place of your younger sisters in every thing—but no matter—I shall grow older and older every day, you know.

Charl. Go, you little madcap!

Sally.

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 269

Sally. I shall dance at your wedding, I promise you.

Lett. Hold your tongue, you little devil you!

Sally. [*Singing.*]

Well, well, say no more!

Sure you told me before,

I prithee, go talk to your parrot, your parrot;

I'm not such an elf,

Tho' I say it myself,

But I know a sheep's head from a carrot, a carrot!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE,

SCENE, *a street in Stratford; on one side, the house
wherein Shakespeare was born.*

The PAGEANT,
Exhibiting the characters of Shakespeare.

Martial Musick.

ROMAN CHARACTERS.

Soldiers——two by two.

Falces.

Trophies——S. P. Q. R. &c.

CORIOLANUS.

Roman Ladies——dishevelled.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

The Roman Eagle.

Brutus and Cassius——bearing daggers.

Soft Musick.

ANTONY and CLEOPATRA.

Charmion and Iras.

Grand

SHAKESPEARE PROCESSION. 271

Grand Musick.

OLD ENGLISH CHARACTERS.

KING JOHN.

Constance, Prince Arthur, and Hubert.

RICHARD the THIRD.

Edward the Sixth—and duke of York.

HARRY the EIGHTH.

Cardinal Wolsey.

Coronation Anthem.

Anne Bullen under coronation canopy.

Attendants.

Magical Musick, "Above, about, and underneath."

PROSPERO.

Miranda and Ferdinand.

Drunken Sailors.

Trinculo and Caliban.

Ariel.

Dæmons and other Spirits.

Macbeth's Musick.

HECATE.

Witches—two by two.

The two Baby Spirits.—One with a crown,
the other with a bough.

Fairy

272 SHAKESPEARE PROCESSION.

Fairy Musick.

OBERON and TITANIA—in a nutshell.
Other Fairies.

Solemn Musick.

The TRAGICK MUSE.

OTHELLO and DESDEMONA.

GHOST in HAMLET.

Hamlet, following the Ghost, with his sword drawn.
Ophelia in her madness.

LEAR and CORDELIA.

JACHIMO.

POSTHUMUS and IMOGEN.

Bellarius between the two brothers.

MACBETH, with daggers bloody.
Banquo's Ghost.

Lady Macbeth, with the candle.

FRIAR LAWRENCE.

Dead march in Saul.

Juliet's bier. Attendants.

Allegro.

SHAKESPEARE PROCESSION. 273

Allegro.

The COMICK MUSE.

Shallow and Silence.

Slender and Dr. Caius.

Ford, Sir Hugh Evans, and Page.

Mrs. Quickly and Pistol.

Bardolph and Nym.

Mrs. Ford, Falstaff, and Mrs. Page.

TOUCHSTONE and LANCELOT.

MALVOLIO, cross-gartered.

Andante.

FLORIZEL and PERDITA.

Autolycus.

ANTONIO and BASSANIO.

Portia and Nerissa (as Lawyers).

Shylock—with knife, scales, and bond.

274 SHAKESPEARE PROCESSION.

Flourish.

DRAMATICK TROPHIES.

PEGASUS.

APOLLO.

The Car (drawn by the Muses) containing the
Bust of SHAKESPEARE, crowned by
TIME and FAME,
And attended by the THREE GRACES.
Cupids, Satyrs, Bacchanals, &c.

A I R. By Mrs. MATTOCKS.

I.

Sweetest Bard that ever sung,
Nature's glory, Fancy's child;
Never sure did witching tongue,
Warble forth such wood-notes wild!

II.

Come each Muse, and sister Grace,
Loves and Pleasures, hither come;
Well you know this happy place:
Avon's banks were once your home.

III.

Bring the laurel, bring the flow'rs,
Songs of triumph to him raise!
He united all your pow'rs,
All uniting, sing his praise!

Ode on Dedicating a Building to Shakespeare.

A C T

A C T III.

Charlotte and Sally meeting Lettice.—Charlotte in a pink domino—Lettice in a blue Turkish habit.

— *Lettice.*

WELL! have you been with your mama and Mr. Marcourt, madam?

Charl. I have.

Lett. And what have you done?

Charl. Told them every thing that past between me and my papa.

Lett. Indeed!

Charl. To be sure. I have done so all along; you know; and this has inspired so much confidence on each side, that neither one nor the other entertain the least suspicion of my deceiving them both.

Lett. But how have you settled matters, madam?

Charl. I think, very cleverly. Mr. Marcourt has suggested to my mama, that that there is nothing so much like a person of fashion, as to receive

masks at your own house before going to the public masquerade: So our doors are to be thrown open to all Stratford. You are (as we settled at first) to amuse Mr. Kitchen in that habit; and I am, as my mama supposes, to go off with Mr. Marcourt in this.

Lett. But your mama will find herself sadly deceived.

Sally. Yes; I am to manage that, Lettice. My sister has given me my cue—and never trust me, if I don't make a fool of him.

Lett. Oh, I don't doubt you.

Charl. All we want at present is a little time, Lettice. Colonel Frankly, you may be sure, will be here. The other parties must be put upon a wrong scent, and in the mean while I shall give my hand to the colonel, which my papa and mama have severally destined to Mr. Marcourt and Mr. Kitchen.

Lett. But how am I to treat Mr. Kitchen?

Charl. Why thus—Ha! yonder comes Mr. Marcourt. Come into the next room, Lettice, and I'll explain every thing—Now remember your instructions, Sally!

Sally. Let me alone! go, and give Lettice her lesson: I am perfect in mine.

Lett.

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 277

Lett. Ay, you are an apt scholar, I'll warrant you.

Charl. Well! success attend you! Come, Lettice!

[*Exeunt Charl. and Lett.*]

Sally alone.

Sally. Now for as many fibs as I ever told my mama or my governess! Here the gentleman comes—full of pride and conceit. He is a pretty man too; but I don't like him half so well as colonel Frankly.

Enter Marcourt.

Marc. Ha! my little puppet! what do you do here all alone, my dear?

Sally. Nothing at all, not I, Sir.

Marc. You seem dull, my dear. Come, let us chatter a little, and that will put you in spirits.

Sally. Will it? why, what will you say to me, Sir?

Marc. Say to you? I'll tell you you're as handsome as a little angel.

Sally. Ah! but do you really believe so, Sir?

Marc. Yes, indeed do I—I could almost find in my heart to make love to you.

Sally. Oh, but they say I am too little yet awhile—but have a little patience, and I shall be as tall as my sister.

Marc. That you will very soon, my little dear!

and when I am married to your sister, I'll take care to get you a husband.

Sally. Oh dear! you married to my sister! When will that be, I wonder?

Marc. Very soon, my dear! to-day, or to-morrow, perhaps.

Sally. To-morrow come-never, I believe.

Marc. Why so, my dear?

Sally. Ah, you want to pump me. But I must not tell tales, you know. I shall be huffed if I do.

Marc. Egad, I may be tricked here—[*Aside.*] Well, but, my little dear, you may tell *me*—You shall come to no harm, I promise you.

Sally. And won't you say that I told you?

Marc. No: I'll swear——

Sally. Oh dear! don't you swear: that's naughty, and will frighten me.

Marc. Well—upon my honour then, nobody shall know that you told me.

Sally. But is there nobody listening?

Marc. Not a creature—we're all alone—Come now! hide nothing from me; there's a good little soul!

Sally. Why then—you are imposed upon, Sir.

Marc. Ay? egad, I was afraid so—but how? how, my dear?

Sally,

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 279

Sally. As they think I am but a child, they don't mind what they say before me—so I hear all their contrivances.

Marc. Well! what are they?

Sally. It made me mad to think they should abuse such a charming pretty gentleman, as you are. I am sure, if I was my sister, I should like you a thousand times better than Mr. Kitchen.

Marc. What a sensible little creature it is!—There's a good child!—but what were the contrivances you were speaking of?

Sally. For my sister to go off with Mr. Kitchen, and be married to him.

Marc. Ay! how?

Sally. In a blue Turkish habit.

Marc. Oh, I know that.

Sally. No, indeed, but you don't, Sir. I know what you think well enough. I heard my sister say that she had fairly told mama and you, that she had settled it so with papa, only to throw you the more off your guard, and make you believe she would go along with you in a pink domino. I pretended to be for Mr. Marcourt, says she: But indeed, says she, I shall do as my papa would have me, for all that. I'll put on the blue Turkish habit, and go with Mr. Kitchen.

Marc. So, so! I am to be bubbled then.

Sally. That you will, if you don't look after the lady in the Turkish habit, I can tell you, Sir.

Marc. Oh, I shall take care, I warrant you.

Sally. Ay, you know all their secrets now; but if you say I told you, I'll never let you know any thing again.

Marc. Never fear, my dear.—I'll blow up all their plots, and pretend I discovered them by accident.

Sally. Do, do!—But I must leave you now, Sir; for if my sister, or papa, or Lettice, should see us together, they may suspect something.

Marc. So they may—but before you go, let me give you one kiss for your intelligence!

Sally. Oh, no! I must not kiss the gentlemen.

Marc. Go, you little coquet, you!

Sally. However, I'll make you one of my best dancing curtsies.

Marc. Oh, your servant, miss!

[She makes him a low curtsy—but as he turns away, holds up her hands and laughs at him—He turns suddenly towards her—she calls up a grave look, makes him another low curtsy, and runs away romping.]

Marcourt alone.

A lucky discovery this—and very whimsically made too—Fools and children always speak truth, they

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 281

they say—But Charlotte cannot seriously prefer Kitchen to me—I think I may venture to say that's impossible—No! She has given into this, merely to oblige her father, and will be happy to see his intentions defeated. I'll about it instantly—It shall be done, my dear, on purpose to oblige you. [*Exit.*]

A hall.

Enter Mrs. Crofs and Lettice.

Mrs. Crofs. Well, I declare I am quite delighted with this idea of Mr. Marcourt's, of receiving masks at home. It is so much in the stile of people of condition—The gentility of it pleases me almost as much as contradicting my husband.

Lett. It is a great happiness that masquerades are coming into fashion again. It gives a lady a fine opportunity of having her own way, to be sure, ma'am.

Mrs. Crofs. So it does, Lettice, as Mr. Crofs shall experience. Charlotte has followed my directions, I hope?

Lett. To a tittle, ma'am—You see I am ready dress'd for the purpose.

Mrs. Crofs. Very well. I shall have witnesses of my triumph too—That will be charming. Is every thing ready in the apartments to receive the company?

Lett.

Lett. Every thing, ma'am.

Mrs. Crofs. Have they moved the partition between the fore and back room?

Lett. They have, ma'am.

Mrs. Crofs. Have they stuck the ends of *spermaceti* in the girandoles? And have you sent to the apothecary's for a sufficient quantity of cream of tartar to make lemonade?

Lett. Your orders have been exactly obeyed, ma'am.

Mrs. Crofs. Mighty well. You know I die, if I have not every thing in the highest stile—If I give but a plate of bread and butter, I give it like a person of condition. But I must go, and do the honours of the house—I see some masks going into the yellow room—I have sent cards to every body one knows that's at Stratford—And I expect a member of parliament with his wife and daughters, the dowager lady Codille, Sir Thomas Frippery, and a Yellow admiral—Be sure you take care, Lettice!

[*Exit.*

Lettice alone.

Lett. Yes; I shall take care of more than you are aware, I promise you, madam—How happy the old gentlewoman makes herself, in her success, as she fancies it! My master is in the very same case—

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 283

case—And my young lady too much for them both. Surely, there must be some very extraordinary pleasure in a man's plaguing his wife, and a woman's tormenting her husband. My master and mistress think of nothing else. They are like flint and steel, perpetually striking fire out of each other—Oh, here comes Mr. Kitchen—As true to his appointment, as if it was an invitation to turtle or venison—Now for a little masquerade frolick!

[Puts on her mask.]

Enter Kitchen.

Kitchen. Your servant, madam!

Lett. Your servant, good Sir!

[Pulling off her mask.]

Kitchen. What! is it you, Mrs. Lettice? I thought it had been miss Charlotte.

Lett. No, Sir; my mistress could not possibly come herself—And so she has sent me in her place.

Kitchen. I am obliged to you for coming; but I have been sworn at Highgate, Mrs. Lettice, and never take the maid instead of the mistress.

Lett. But I suppose you have no objection to take the maid in order to get at the mistress?

Kitchen. No, no! But what's the meaning of all this? How came you here in that habit?

Lett.

Lett. I'll tell you, Sir. Mrs. Crofs, you know, is as much fet against you, as my master is your friend—And my young lady has a sad time with them both together, poor soul!

Kitchen. So she has, and yet she manages them pretty well too. She mixes with them as kindly as an egg between oil and vinegar.

Lett. Why, she must seem to oblige my old lady; but her inclinations are entirely with you and her papa.

Kitchen. Yes, yes, I know that, Lettice.

Lett. But to make short of my story, Sir; her mama having unluckily discovered that Miss Charlotte had promised to meet you in this habit, insists on my putting it on, dresses her daughter in a pink domino, and sends her to meet Mr. Marcourt.

Kitchen. The devil!

Lett. Patience, Sir; my young lady has turned all this to your advantage.

Kitchen. By what means?

Lett. She has contrived to make Mr. Marcourt imagine he is imposed upon. Her little sister, who is as sharp as a needle, has been set to tell him, that Miss Charlotte still intends to meet you in this habit. This puts him upon a false train—sends him in pursuit of me—and in the mean while

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 285

while you are to give my mistress the meeting near the great booth, Sir.

Kitchen. Excellent ! I'll away this very instant.

Lett. Stay, sir. As I live, yonder comes Mr. Marcourt. If he sees you leave me so abruptly, he will hardly take me for my young mistress. Suppose you seem to have me under your care, and wait a few moments for a favourable opportunity to slip off to your appointment.

Kitchen. I'll do it.

Lett. He's just here. I must on with my mask, and not open my lips, for fear of discovery.

[*Puts on her mask.*]

Enter Marcourt.

Marc. There they are, egad—just as the little girl told me—Your servant, ma'am. [*Lettice curtsies.*]
Your servant, Mr. Kitchen !

Kitchen. Your humble servant, Sir !

Marc. Give me leave, Sir, to pay my respects to that lady.

Kitchen. Excuse me, Sir. This lady has nothing to say to you.

Marc. You are mistaken, Sir. I came on purpose to meet her.

Kitchen. That cannot be, Sir—This is an acquaintance of mine—and not the lady you mean.

Marc.

Marc. But I am convinced it is, Sir.

Kitchen. Pho! prithee, man! A lady in a mask is like a dish under cover; you can never tell what it is.

Marc. Pardon me, Sir. This may be disguised in the dressing; but I like the dish, and must taste of it. *[Taking hold of Lettice.]*

Kitchen. Let the lady alone, Sir!

Marc. This way, madam!

Kitchen. Zounds, Mr. Marcourt!

[Marcourt struggles with Lettice—she screams.]

Enter Crofs and Mrs. Crofs.

Crofs. Hey-day! What is all this?

Kitchen. Only Mr. Marcourt, Sir, that will fall on without invitation. Here's a lady complains of his rudeness.

Crofs. Rudeness! in my house! for shame, Mr. Marcourt!—This is your man of quality, Mrs. Crofs.

Marc. Only a masquerade frolick; nothing else, Sir.

Crofs. Well then—by the laws of all masquerades, the mask being taken off puts an end to impertinence—Pull off your mask, and put him to the blush, madam.

Kitchen. By no means, Sir.

Crofs.

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 287

Crofs. Why not? She shall pull it off, and teach him how to behave himself.

Mrs. Crofs. No, no; the lady must not pull her mask off.

Crofs. But I say, she shall.

Mrs. Crofs. But I say, she shall not.

Crofs. But she shall, Mrs. Crofs.

Mrs. Crofs. But she shall not, Mr. Crofs.

Marc. Ay, say, let the lady unmask, and I'll be satisfied.

Mrs. Crofs. What! are you mad, Mr. Marcourt?

Marc. My dear Mrs. Crofs, you are not in the secret! [takes hold of Lettice.

Lett. No violence, I beseech you, Sir! the fight is not worth so much importunity. [unmasks.

Marc. Confusion!—Lettice?

Lett. At your service, Sir! [curtsies.

Crofs. Lettice! in that habit? Where is my daughter?

Mrs. Crofs. I knew she was not here—Don't be uneasy, my dear! I understood Mr. Kitchen was desirous of a rendezvous; so I put the change upon him, thinking Lettice a more proper companion for him than my daughter. Ha, ha, ha!

Crofs. Death and the devil! Am I deceived then? fooled by my wife too!

Kitchen.

Kitchen. Have patience, Sir. Many things happen between the cup and the lip. Sweet meat may have four sauce, they say. A word with you. [*Talks apart with Crofs, while Mrs. Crofs converses with Marcourt.*]

Mrs. Crofs. But where is the girl all this while, Mr. Marcourt?

Marc. Devil fetch me, if I know, madam. I took Lettice for her.

Mrs. Crofs. What! were you deceived too? How could you possibly be so absurd? Did not I agree to put Lettice into the Turkish habit, and to dress Charlotte in the pink domino?

[*Kitchen goes out here.*]

Marc. Yes—but I was told I was imposed upon—and now I begin to think I have made a fool of myself.

Mrs. Crofs. I dress'd Charlotte, and left her in my room waiting for you.—I never knew any thing so ridiculous! However, there can be no great harm done—it is plain she is not with Mr. Kitchen, you see.

Crofs. [*Overhearing.*] Don't be too sure of that, Mrs. Crofs! Mr. Marcourt and you are but weak politicians. You settle your own plan of operations, and never consider the motions of the enemy.

Mrs.

Mrs. Crofs. What motions! Where's Mr. Kitchen? gone?

Crofs. Yes—gone. Gone to marry my daughter. Mr. Marcourt rather chose to make up to Lettice, you see.

Mrs. Crofs. If she marries Mr. Kitchen, I'll never see her face again.—To have your way in every thing! I cannot bear it!

Crofs. Rave on, my dear! We must give losers leave to talk, you know. Let them laugh that win!

Mrs. Crofs. Provoking insolence! I shall die with vexation.

Crofs. Ha, ha, ha! poor woman!

Enter Fleece.

Crofs. Mr. Fleece! how do you, Sir? I am glad to see you—heartily glad to see you, Mr. Fleece.

Mrs. Crofs. How do you do, Mr. Fleece?

Fleece. Very well, I thank you, ma'am. I wish you joy, ma'am—I wish you joy of Miss Charlotte's marriage, Mr. Crofs.

Crofs. My daughter's marriage!—Look you there, ma'am.—Tol derol, lol derol, lol—She's married, you say?

Fleece. Yes, Sir; I left the couple at the church-door.

Crofs. Tol derol, lol derol, lol!

Mrs. Crofs. Charlotte married! to whom? to Mr. Kitchen, Mr. Fleece?

Crofs. Mr. Kitchen! ay, to be sure—whom should it be else, Mrs. Crofs?

Fleece. Mr. Kitchen! lackaday, no, ma'am—not Mr. Kitchen, Sir; I never heard of the gentleman.

Marc. Well said, my little woolcomber!—nor any body else, I believe.

Mrs. Crofs. Not Mr. Kitchen. Mind that, Mr. Crofs!

Crofs. Not Mr. Kitchen? Why then, who the devil is she married to?

Fleece. To Colonel Frankly, Sir.

Marc. Colonel Frankly! there's a fly dog now!

Mrs. Crofs. Well—I don't care who it is, so as it is not Mr. Kitchen.

Marc. I am infinitely obliged to you, ma'am.

Crofs. 'Sdeath, Sir! but I'll set all Stratford in a blaze. Did not you receive a letter from us about this affair?

Fleece.

Fleece. I did, Sir, from Miss Charlotte—and subscribed with yours and Mrs. Cross's approbation.—I obeyed your orders precisely, took this house immediately, and had the banns asked between the parties.

Cross. Well! and the parties were my daughter and Mr. Kitchen.

Mrs. Cross. No; my daughter and Mr. Marcourt.

Fleece. Neither; but your daughter and Colonel Frankly. Here are my credentials, Sir—the letter in your's, Mrs. Cross's, and Miss Charlotte's, handwriting. *[Delivers the letter.]*

Cross. So, so! the little gipsy has deceived us both then.—She told me she would put in Mr. Kitchen's name.

Mrs. Cross. And me, that she would deceive you, and insert Mr. Marcourt's.

Marc. Instead of which, she has put in Colonel Frankly's—A bubble, by Jupiter!—My wager with Kitchen is a drawn bet then.

Enter Kitchen.

Marc. Ha! my brother in adversity, where do you come from?

Kitchen. From church.—I arrived just at the conclusion of the ceremony; but the latter end of

a feast is better than the beginning of a fray, they say. We shall have a Jubilee wedding of it. There is the bride and bridegroom, with all Stratford, at my heels.

Mrs. Crofs. They sha'n't enter my doors. I won't see their faces.

Kitchen. You had better, madam; or this affair will make us all very ridiculous.

Mrs. Crofs. Don't tell me—to be treated in such a shameful manner! I will have nothing to say to them—and if Mr. Crofs has a grain of spirit, he will turn the undutiful wretch out of doors, and cut her off with a shilling.

Crofs. But I shall do no such thing, Mrs. Crofs. My conduct shall be just the reverse, madam. I will receive them with open arms: For if any thing has been amiss, it has been entirely your fault.

Mrs. Crofs. My fault! how can that be?

Crofs. Very easily. If you had been of my mind, and had not encouraged the girl to be disobedient, she would not have been undutiful.

Mrs. Crofs. Well—and if you had been of my mind, would not it have been just the same thing?

Crofs. I begin to think we have both been to blame.

Enter

THE SHAKESPEARE JUBILEE. 293

Enter Charlotte and Colonel Frankly.

Frankly. Permit us, Sir, to throw ourselves at your feet, and to hope for your's and Mrs. Crofs's forgiveness. My Charlotte thought it impossible to prevail on both to consent to the same match, and that is her only excuse for marrying without the approbation of either.

Crofs. Your apology is a severe reproof, Sir.

Mrs. Crofs. I don't care—so she is not wife to Mr. Kitchen.

Kitchen. Faith, madam, it gives me no uneasiness. I have been roasted a little, it is true—but not so much as my friend here.—He got into the wheel, and turned himself.

Marc. No matter—I scorn to be outdone in good humour—and as this marriage has begun in masquerade, if the present good company will adjourn to the Jubilee-masked-ball this evening, I will most chearfully attend them there.

Mrs. Crofs. Oh, as to the masquerade, it is a genteel affair, and I like it of all things.

Crofs. Come then, Mrs. Crofs! It was impossible we both should have been pleased; so let us not repine that Charlotte has satisfied neither. We may, however, derive from this incident one material piece of instruction—That no family can be
well

well governed, where there is a disagreement between those who are placed at the head of it—and that nothing is so necessary as harmony among those whose interests are so intimately connected as those of Man and Wife.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

